COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an upper-division undergraduate course on the sociological study of city life and urban processes. We will analyze social, economic, and political issues facing urban communities in the United States and other places. This semester we will focus on your local region and questions of urban problems, power, and justice.

Some of the main themes of this course are urban problems, city identities, housing and social class in the city, the arts and gentrification, technology and the utopia city, and urban field research. You must access the following texts for success on exams and assignments. These texts are not on reserve so they must be rented or purchased by students.

Course Readings:


Grading Policy and Philosophy

I view grades as a way to provide feedback on your progress toward fulfilling our learning outcomes. Because there are opportunities for revision, every student has the capacity to receive the grade he or she desires. You will be most successful in this course if you develop conscientious work habits, complete all of the assigned work on time, participate ethically in your group projects, and make thoughtful contributions to class discussions and learning environment.

You can expect to spend 6 hours a week outside of class in reading and writing.

Final letter grades will be based on the following scale: 90 – 100% = A- to A+; 80 – 89% = B- to B+; 70 – 79% = C- to C+; 60 – 69% = D- to D+; and Below 60% = F. If you fail to do any of your assignments you cannot pass the course as passing means you have attempted and satisfied the outlined requirements. You will not be able to pass the course if you miss class meetings excessively.

Lateness Policy

Assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of the class period they are due. No late papers will be accepted for full credit. If you have printer issues email the essay as a placeholder until you turn it in as a hardcopy. I will drop your lowest Quotes-n-Questions Reflection grade.
Major Assignments

I. 2-Page Quotes-n-Questions Reflection 30 percent
II. Thursday Key Terms Quizzes 10 percent
III. Essay #1: City Identities 10 percent
IV. Student Reading & News Presentation 10 percent
V. Essay #2: Community Observation Essay 10 percent
VI. Midterm 10 percent
VII. Final Exam 20 percent
=100 percent

Major Assignments Explained

Note: Canvas Essays:
All formal writing assignments should be proofread and error-free. Papers should be typed, spell checked, double-spaced, 12 point font, in Arial, Universe, Technical, Times, or a similar sized font, 1 inch margins, and at college level writing. On the first page, include a title (i.e., City Identities: Your Sub-heading Here), your name, instructor’s name, course number and section, and date. Since I will try to keep this course mostly paperless, I ask that you do your best to format the text you will cut-n-paste into Canvas so that it is reasonably legible for the reader. Use rtf or rich text format in your text. (Formatting is sometimes incorrect when pasted into Canvas)

I. 2-Page Quotes-n-Questions Reflection and Sharing (30 percent) (hardcopy due weekly):
You will write a weekly Two-page single spaced (1 ½- 2pages minimum) reflection on all readings (see links in syllabus) for the new week (12 pt font, single-spaced). **Steps:**
1. You will write your favorite socially significant or theoretically intriguing key quotes from each of the current readings and **one** of the film clips. **Write two quotes per reading.**
2. Then, you must write a discussion question related directly to each quote you wrote.
3. Write your own answer to each of your own questions (this will be read during your presentation after you’ve listened to fellow students answer your question).

In terms of the sharing of your quotes-n-questions, you will share in your small groups the best 2 quotes-n-questions you wrote. Then, we will all share out from our small groups.

I will collect these Quotes-n-Questions every Thursday after our session. At the end of the first half of the course you will be given a grade based on whether you followed directions closely.

II. Thursday Key Terms Quizzes (10 percent): Purchase 10 small 15-20 question scantrons as students will be quizzed over the main key terms in each week’s readings. Quizzes will usually take place at the end of class Thursdays so prepare by studying the key terms of each reading.

III. 5-Page Essay #1: City Identities (10 percent) (paste to Canvas):
**Choice A: Historical Juxtapositioning:** Find an historical picture of the city. Take a relatively precise photo of this same spot and juxtapose the two images. Explain two important symbols in the historical photo. Unpack the sociological significance of the symbols. Then, explain how these symbolic meanings have changed. What is now symbolically meaningful about this spot today? How have values changed since the historical photo was taken? Who owns these properties? What are the new building used for and by whom, compared to the past? Which groups have wealth or poverty today in comparison to the past in this city space?

**Choice B: Mapping Your Neighborhood:** Draw a pencil drawing of your neighborhood (a 5 block area or so). Explain the 5 most easily identifiable and easy to remember features in this mapped area, including what Jane Jacobs calls, visual interruptions, “or buildings, bridges, or hills or other natural features that are “cutting off the indefinite distant view and at the same time visually highlighting and celebrating intense street use by giving it a hint of enclosure and entity” (380). Then, explain your
route home and the kind of transportation you use and explain why this is the most efficient. Also, explain the limits of public transportation in your part of the city.

**Choice C: Poetics of the City:** Write a well-crafted poem that captures at least 3 outdoor nodes in your city. You will do a reading of this poem in class as part of your evaluation. You will do a written analysis of the 3 outdoor nodes or heavily populated focal centers of the city that “behave very much like landmarks and get much of their power as clarifiers of order from the distinctiveness of their use, just as in the case of landmark buildings” (Jacobs 1992:386). You will then write a 3-page analysis explaining how these nodes are socially related to some of the issues covered in your *Urban Issues* textbook (make use of the table of contents to locate the relevant chapters).

**IV. Student Reading & News Presentation (15 minutes) (in Pairs): (10 percent)** Each Thursday students (in pairs) will present (within a 15 minute slot) their own chosen course reading explaining how we can view it through the lens of the ‘sociological imagination,’ *the sociological connection between biography, history and social structure* (*cf.* C. Wright Mills). Then you will provide a news article related to the subject matter in the reading you chose (in the first week). Students will provide:

- ✓ **Thesis:** The thesis statement and your explanation of the thesis in your own words
- ✓ **Evidence:** Provide two pieces of evidence used by the author to make her/his point;
- ✓ **Story telling/Example:** Relate the experiences presented in the reading to your own life experiences or the experiences of your own family and/or friends (both students do this). Clearly share these experiences;
- ✓ **News Article:** Provide a news article related to the subject matter (one per student).
- ✓ **Video Clip:** Conclude by sharing one *Youtube* video on this topic: re-state the thesis and your opinions about the points made in the reading and finally, ask 2 strong critical discussion question to get the classroom to discuss the topic in the video as related to the course reading (one clip per presentation).
- ✓ **Cite Sources:** Be sure to use the author’s last names and always show the citation source of the reading you are addressing either written on the board or in a Powerpoint slide. We should be able to find your article with little effort.

**There will be no make-ups** so, if you miss your date, do not ask for a make-up because it will not be granted without a doctor’s note stating you were incapacitated. Please use PowerPoint (or other such tool) and you must use your own laptop. If there is a family crisis you must come to office hours to discuss this matter for me to consider offering a make-up date for partial credit. Bring a backup of your presentation on a flash drive and email it to all members of the group when it is edited and complete. Sign up in class during week one. (10 percent)

All group-presentation will be evaluated according to this rubric:

- A. **Followed directions:** Does this presentation include all of the criteria outlined?
- B. **Division of labor:** Does each member contribute significantly to both the information presented and the actual delivery of the material?
- C. **Significance:** Do the presenters provide only significant findings? Do they avoid trailing off topic?
- D. **Balanced:** Do the presenters provide a balance between text and imagery to capture their observations about these two cities?
- E. **Clarity:** Does the presentation answer more questions than it provokes? In other words, does the audience feel they learned something important from your presentation or are they left with a need for clarification.
- F. **Audience Engagement:** Do the presenters maintain engagement with the classroom through techniques like asking questions, asking for personal anecdotes, clear eye contact, voice inflection, humor, story-telling, etc. (Note: students that do not show up for their group presentations will lose 5 points from their grade.)
V. 5-Page Essay #2: Community Observation Essay (10 percent) (paste to Canvas):

Choice A: Artistic Representation: Locate an artist doing work that calls attention to the meanings of the city. Whether it is a body of artwork that raises social consciousness or highlights city contradictions in social life, you should explain how their work attempts to intervene in social life. Explain how the work captures the city’s identity or tries to frame the meaning of the city. Explain how this work is appreciated or not appreciated through interviewing the artist and a few of their fans/critics. You can use online or other articles to gather these perspectives if the artist or their fans/critics are unavailable to interview. Include images of the work. Cite all sources correctly.

Choice B: Gentrification’s Effects: Write down 5 interview questions. Interview a person personally affected by gentrification using an audio recording application or device. Transcribe the interview. Code the interview focusing on 3 important, socially significant insights about how gentrification really affects city residents. Connect these findings to our readings (3 sources minimum; Cite all sources correctly).

Choice C: Racialized Housing Patterns: Describe how your neighborhood has changed racially over the last few decades. Spend two one-hour (or more) sessions watching people entering and leaving our neighborhood. You can do this by taking walks in your neighborhood. Describe as best you can, the racial diversity of your neighborhood. How has the racial makeup of your neighborhood changed or stayed the same in the last thirty or so years? Explain the cultural climate and economic structural changes that have shaped the racial composition of your neighborhood. Do research on the racial make-up of your neighborhood and compare and contrast it to today’s available data. Cite all sources correctly.

VI. Midterm: The midterm exam will cover the key concepts from readings, films, lectures, and our discussions. 30-Questions Multiple choice and True/False. Use a green scantron: 882E. (10 percent)

VII. Final Exam: The midterm exam will cover the key concepts from readings, films, lectures, and our discussions. 50 Questions Multiple choice and True/False. Use a green scantron: 882E. (20 percent)

Homework Assignments: (lose 2/100 points per un-submitted assignment)
These are a series of community activities and reports to be done outside of class. They will relate to the reading material in class. A written and oral version will be presented in class the week following the date it is assigned.

Participation is Mandatory

Official SJSU Amended Policy:

“ATTENDANCE

Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.

If a student has been out of school for one or more days, he should report to his instructors upon his return to inquire about making up the work. Students who know in advance that they will miss one or more classes should inform their instructors about their plans.”

Participation in class is vital to a vibrant classroom community. Bell hooks writes: “Conversation is the central location of pedagogy for the democratic educator.” The learning in this course is experiential and collaborative; therefore, your contributions to our conversations and group activities will be needed each and every session. You are expected to attend all classes unless a compelling reason (e.g., serious illness or family emergency) requires that you are absent.

If you MUST be absent for any reason:
1. Contact me before class at steve.nava@sjsu.edu
2. Contact another student in the class to find out what you have missed. It is not customary for students to consult the Instructor about missed class activities when the course syllabus outlines this information clearly. Contact the instructor for clarifications if what is written in the syllabus is not clear or if you need help answering particular questions. It is your job to do research on your own in order to answer rudimentary questions.
3. If you are to miss more than 2 class meetings for any reason, email me to let me know our circumstances.
4. If you must miss a class due to the celebration of religious or cultural holidays not observed by the university, please discuss this with me in advance so we can make any necessary arrangements. Family vacation are not considered excused absences so, late work will be penalized by loss of 10% to 20% depending on the assignment and the instructor’s discretion having considered the student’s circumstances.

Classroom Norms
We will develop these norms as a group, but I have the following expectations for classroom behavior:
1) RESPECTFUL ENGAGED participation (no resting your head or sleeping)
2) CELL PHONES OFF and stored away (texting is NOT allowed, at all) If I see continued cell phone use non-related to our class, I will ask you to leave and not return until we have clarified the rules in office hours
3) AD HOMINEM: no personal attacks on anyone in the room for any reason. You pay critique the arguments of your peers, but never the person making the argument. Interrogate their logic, but not their personal identity.
4) TAKE PAPER NOTES:
I want to thank you in advance for giving full attention to the class, and for turning off and storing all electronic devices. Learning occurs most productively in a safe, respectful environment. Differences of viewpoints, orientation, and experience are expected and welcomed in class discussions. If you do not feel safe or respected, please talk to me immediately.

I plan on enjoying our time together, and want to help you succeed academically. I will do my best to make course concepts accessible. Your active engagement will make our knowledge production richer. Don’t hesitate to talk to me outside of class time during office hours.

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:
A = 93 – 100% B = 83 – 87% C = 73 – 77% D = 63 – 67%
A- = 90 – 92% B- = 80 – 82% C- = 70 – 72% D- = 60 – 62%
B+ = 88 – 89% C+ = 78 – 79% D+ = 68 – 69% F = 59% or less

University Policies
As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See University Policy S90–5 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the SJSU catalog, at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding
Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic
year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course lectures. Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at http://www.sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See University Policy S14-7 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center at http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/ located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJUS Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are
offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Reading Schedule and Activities: Students will read the material listed before the class meeting date listed.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 28th.</td>
<td>Lecture: Cities, Identities, and Origins</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 4th</td>
<td>“Chapter 1 Urbanization in Western Societies,” in Urban People and Places</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 11th</td>
<td>“Chapter 3 How the United States Became Urban,” in Urban People and Places</td>
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<td>Feb 9th Last day to drop a class without a &quot;W&quot; grade for Spring</td>
<td>Wright, Frank Lloyd. (1928) “Broadacre City: A New Community Plan.” on Canvas</td>
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<td>Film discussion: Wizard of Oz and The meaning of cities and personal identity</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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| 4    | Feb 19<sup>th</sup> | Urban Theory | “Chapter 4 The Seeds of Urban Theory: Classic Statements About Cities and Communities,” in *Urban People and Places*  
> “Chapter 5 The Fruits of Urban Theory: Contemporary Perspectives on Cities and Communities,” in *Urban People and Places*  
| 5    | Feb 25<sup>th</sup> | Civic Culture | “Chapter 6 Civic Culture and the Politics of Community,” in *Urban People and Places*  
> “Part One: The Peculiar Nature of Cities,” in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs  
> Added clip: *Jane Jacobs: Neighborhoods in Action*  
> Film clip: *Sidewalk*, by Mitchell Duneier |
| 6    | March 3<sup>rd</sup> | City Diversity | Essay #1 City Identities (due Wednesday March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, before midnight)  
> “Part Two: The Conditions for City Diversity,” in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs (no Q-n-Q due today; only read the article)  
> Share Essays Today |
| 7    | March 10<sup>th</sup> | Urban Renewal or Gentrification | “Part Three Forces of Decline and Regeneration,” in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs  
> Ch 3 SMART CITIES, in Urban Issues text |
| 8    | March 17<sup>th</sup> | Urban Renewal or Gentrification | “Part Four Different Tactics,” in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs  
> Midterm: Bring a green Scantron and 2 pencils with erasers |
| 9    | March 24<sup>th</sup> | Urban Renewal or Gentrification | Ch 5 BLIGHTED CITIES, in Urban Issues text  
> Ch 6 DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE, in Urban Issues text  
> **Note: Spring Break next week: no class meeting March 29<sup>th</sup> and 31** |
| 10   | April 7<sup>th</sup> | Transportation Problems | Ch 7 MASS TRANSIT BOOM, in *Urban Issues* text  
| 12   | April 21<sup>st</sup> | Education and City Challenges | Ch 1 SCHOOL REFORM, in *Urban Issues* text  
> Ch 2 FIXING URBAN SCHOOLS, in *Urban Issues* text |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>April 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Jobs and the City</td>
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<td>Ch 4 ATTRACTING JOBS, in <em>Urban Issues</em> text</td>
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<td>Ch 9 THE MINIMUM WAGE, <em>Urban Issues</em> text</td>
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<td>Clip: SJ Raise the Wage Movement</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>May 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Representing City Life</td>
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<td>Ch 10 CHILD POVERTY, in <em>Urban Issues</em> text (no Q-n-Q due today; only read the article)</td>
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<td>Essay #2: Community Observation Essay (due Wednesday May 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; by midnight)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student Essay Presentations: Paper Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>May 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; (last class meeting)</td>
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<td>Potluck, Presentations, and Guided Study Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>May 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Final Exam: Thursday May 19th, 6:00pm-8:15pm</td>
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