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Appalink

Appalachian Studies Association

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APPALINK

The Newsletter for the

APPALACHIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall, 2004

Volume 28, Number 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Melinda Bollar Wagner

We hope that each of you will come to the Appalachian Studies Conference March 18-20, 2005 at Radford University and tell your stories of **Vital Words and Vital Actions: Partnerships to Build a Healthy Place**. See the website appalachianstudies.org for information on how to participate.

But as we busily prepare for the Conference, we hear rumblings in the background that we can't ignore — the guns of war in Iraq. A seat by the window in the front of my class sits empty because a student explained that he would have to leave school without finishing the semester — he'd been called up. The son of a colleague has his tour of duty extended. We see on television the faces and the names of the young people who will not return to their listed hometowns.

Two soldiers from West Virginia have figured prominently in the reporting about the war. One — Jessica Lynch — as a hero; the other — Lynndie England — as a villain. Some sources say that neither deserves the label. It's the actions at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq that catapulted Pfc. England to the front page and the nightly news. When I heard about the events at Abu Ghraib, I thought — How can our American children — my front-row student and his cohorts — be doing this? My mind tried to grasp/build/create explanations and context. Of course the context is war — that the young people who are called upon to carry it out did not create. But how are they and those giving them orders able to carry it forward with actions like those at Abu Ghraib? Was this rendered possible because our children watch too much violent TV and movies and play weird video games? Could I lay it at former actor Arnold Schwarzenegger's door? Are our children encouraged to play in a way that is too cutthroat and competitive? Are they alone too much? I didn't want to be like the preacher I once heard say that American society had gone to heck because of Elvis. But I was seeking a

cause in our culture because perhaps then I could seek an antidote in our culture.

America sees Appalachia as its alter ego. Appalachia is consistently seen as a "world apart," the "other America" even as archaeologists, historians and demographers compile data that suggest that it never was as isolated as it was thought to be. And while the otherness may be exaggerated to make a better fit for the alter ego there are certainly differences between rural and urban and suburban lifestyles. If there ARE things amiss in the culture of the USA, maybe the antidote can be found in the alter ego — in Appalachia.

Ever since Tocqueville toured America in its earliest years, social observers have noted that America's preferred "social character" is an individualistic one, prizing competition, individual achievement, and self-actualization. Political theorist John Wikse describes Americans as viewing "the self as private property." "We can think of ourselves as self-sufficient, self-reliant, self-actualized, and self-possessed."



Melinda Wagner, President

Robert N. Bellah et al's work, *Habits of the Heart*, quelled the doubts of any who remained unconvinced of the primacy of individualism in the United States. It shows that America lacks a language of community: Our language is overwhelmed by words, phrases, and mottoes that express individualism, and few that allow expression of a communal impulse. But the Bellah team's interviews with the American populace were conducted on the coasts. They missed the heartland; they missed the farmland; they missed Appalachia. Perhaps the cultural diversity alive in rural communities embodies a less individualistic — a collective or communal — cultural sub-theme

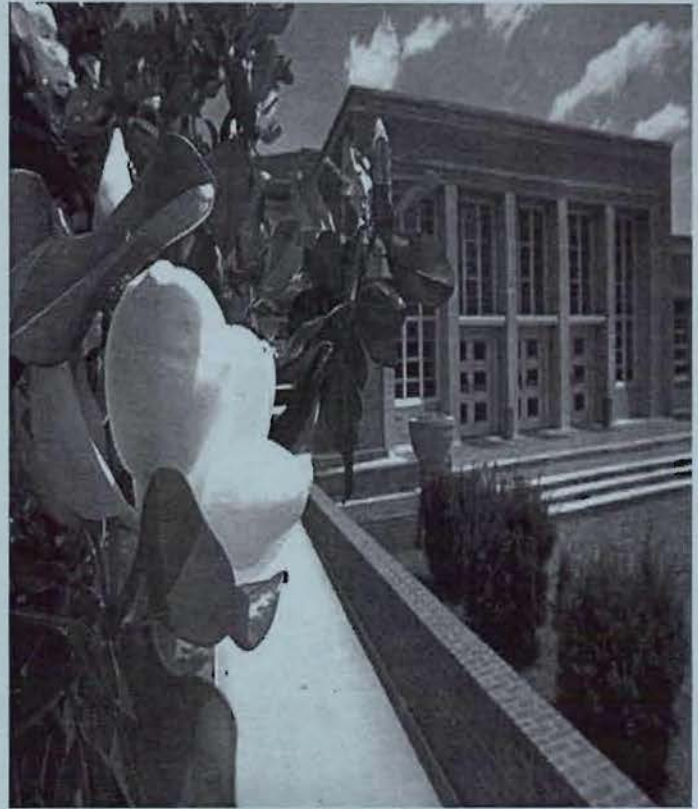
Now of course a good deal of culture change has occurred. John Stephenson, only partly with tongue in cheek, wrote that the road to culture change was paved with Sears Roebuck catalogs. Those catalogs were around for a long time. Gertie Nevels has long since become a card-carrying MasterCard and VISA customer buying via the Internet. QVC and HSN beckon. So to the extent that the communal traits — soft, uncommanding communication style, disdain for confrontation, what one of my students calls "Southern guilt" that haunts if family duties are not attended to, and the other values Loyal Jones eloquently writes about — are chained to economic and social ties and interdependencies, those ties aren't as binding anymore.

Even so research by Radford University students found land-based communal pulses still beating in rural areas here, even as the number of people who make their living as full-time farmers is dwindling fast. Folks still see a difference in mountain culture. They still categorize people as good neighbors if they stop and put your cow back on the right side of the fence; neutral are those who will call you and tell you your cow is out; bad neighbors (those brought-ins) will just drive on by (too fast).

There are still differences. Students from NOVA (Northern Virginia) and Southwest Virginia play them out on their field trips. Take for example the explanation a student from Southwest Virginia had to give to a student from NOVA: "No, the wave from the top of the steering wheel is not some sort of signal to look out for the cops around the next curve." Take for example a fellow gazing at the woods where I live and musing: "I'll bet you see a lot of deer out here" — leaving it to me to invite him to hunt or let it lie — no pressure, no harm either way. Take for example the soft ameliorative direction from the fellow who painted my 1977 red Honda Civic in 1989: "A coat of wax can sure protect 'em."

If some elements of Appalachian cultures could ever qualify as America's alter ego — as its glimmer of a communal impulse that looks out for others and is civil — perhaps they are still there. Perhaps these mountains are nurturing saving graces.

Appalachian mamas, please let your babies grow up to be politicians.



2005 Conference Site, Peters Hall, Radford University



Cook Hall, Radford University

Building a Healthy Region: From Historical Trauma to Hope and Healing

Twenty-Eighth Appalachian Studies Conference

March 18-20, 2005

Radford University Campus, Radford, Virginia

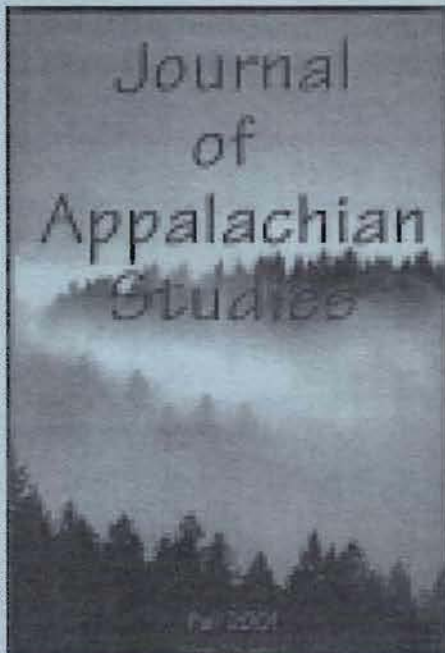
Mark your calendars! The call for papers and participation on our www.appalachianstudies.org website also contains basic information about lodging reservations in and around Radford. We encourage participants to make early reservations. Radford University is easily reached from Exit 109 of Interstate 81. The nearest airport is in Roanoke, 40 miles north.

Radford University is in the beautiful New River Valley. The river, which folklore geologists say is second only to the Nile in age, marks the northern edge of the campus as it flows toward the Gulf of Mexico. We do not plan any rafting trips to New Orleans, but we do plan an exciting conference and look forward to your being part of it.

Parks Lanier, ASC

Journal of Appalachian Studies

The editors of the *Journal of Appalachian Studies* are pleased to note several special offerings that are on the horizon. Foremost is a special issue of the journal that will examine implications of results from the 2000 federal census for the 13-state Appalachian Region. This issue, with numerous contributors from across the region, is being edited by special guest editor, Phil Obermiller. It will include an overview article by Richard Couto. Special funding from the Ford Foundation will allow us to publish this issue at no extra cost to subscribers in addition to our two regular annual issues. Also, forthcoming issues of the journal will focus on important themes including race and white privilege, the environment and environmental activism, and issues facing parents and children in the region. As always, of course, submission of manuscripts on any topics of interest to our readers are invited.



ASA Scholarships

Last March in Cherokee with the help of the Appalachian Consortium, and support from the ARC and both individual and institutional contributors, the ASA was able to provide scholarships for sixty-three students and fifty-four community persons to attend our conference. In all, they received expense and/or registration costs in the amount of \$13,698.60. The ASA could not have accomplished this without the support of our membership and those institutions and/or organizations committed to Appalachian Studies. We wish to thank all of you!

At the Cherokee conference, the Appalachian Consortium raised \$2,509.50 in Silent Auction Scholarship funds with an additional \$677.00 brought in through individual donations. These monies will be used to help community folks and students attend the 2005 conference at Radford University. Please note that once again, Howard Dorgan is asking for your help in meeting the scholarship needs of those who might not otherwise be able to attend our annual conference (see related article in this issue).

Please help us to extend a thank you to everyone who works so hard and long on our auction by stopping by the auction next year and letting them know how much their work is appreciated.

THANK YOU!

2005 ASA Silent Auction First News Release

Greetings! It's that time of the year again, when I customarily send out an initial call for ASA Silent Auction bid items and explain the purpose of the event. If you have been with us since 1998, when all of this started, you probably know that in the last six years we have raised approximately \$18,500 that goes to individuals or groups who have been accepted to participate in an ASA conference but who could not attend without some assistance in meeting the cost of travel, registration, and/or lodging. You may also recall that by 1998 it had become clear that our annual conference expenses would continue to rise, given our growth and the rapidly rising costs of space, food events, printing, entertainment, and a multitude of other budget line items.

This reality disturbed us greatly, particularly since we were trying to keep these expenses in line with financial situations faced by such membership groups as students, elementary and secondary teachers, community activists, and other membership clusters not blessed with annual stipends for professional travel. Each year the ASA president and program chairperson appoints a committee that administers the awarding of the scholarship funds that were generated by the previous year's Silent Auction. The monies raised by the 2004 auction, plus any revenue remaining from a previous year, will be made available for needy individuals or groups attending the 2005 conference. Applicants for this assistance must fill out and submit a Scholarship Request Form found at the end of the Preliminary Conference Program, which also will contain registration information for the conference.

At the moment, our immediate need is to start collecting 2005 auction bid items. The Silent Auction Committee urges all members of the Appalachian Studies Association to involve themselves in this task. It is critical that the full membership of ASA assumes a role in this project. This program is a worthy one and will help in maintaining the rich diversity that ASA conferences have enjoyed to this point. We are particularly pleased with the involvement of local activist groups. Silent auction money significantly helps in this regard. The funds also prove extremely helpful in involving young people in our conference activities. Finally, we must remember all of the minorities that we try to attract.

We hit a slump in Silent Auction revenue for 2003, but I pushed very hard in 2004 and the returns came back up, close to the \$3,000 mark. I'm still hoping for a year in which we will bring in \$4,000. With the help of all of you we can do that.

Bid Items: In addition to the usual craft items, artistic creations, and collectibles of all sorts (wood carvings, white oak baskets, quilts, original paintings, mining artifacts, coal carvings, Depression glass, mountain toys, blown glass, ceramics, pottery, photography, rock and gem collections, woven goods, carved walking canes, crocheted items, and you name it) we also have received valuable collections of items important to research and traditional Appalachian classroom instruction (books, collected journals, video documentaries, recorded music, published Appalachian fiction, old movie or concert posters, map collections, and the like). Likewise, novelty items form an important part of our bid item displays (political cartoons of regional personalities or mountain issues, Hatfield and McCoy romance novels, framed instructions on still construction, and a wide range of objects that always surprise me). Of late, services or privileges offered for bid have generated particularly strong attention (perhaps a lecture or performance that you agree to deliver for free, registrations for upcoming conferences, any consulting that you might offer for bid, and a multitude of possibilities in which you market yourself or the services of an organization you might control). In the past we have only asked that an item be valued at approximately \$10.00 or more.

A special plea to Appalachian writers: In the past I have tried to put together a special mailing to all published Appalachian writers, but those lists have always been very incomplete. Autographed copies of your works are always greatly appreciated. Obviously, this is one area in which our regional presses can also be of great assistance.

A special note to regional craft persons and artisans: We need you to help us and we want to help you. If we are able to display one of your creations as a bid item, along with a brochure or any other informative material telling about you and your craft, we can help with your publicity.

How do you get your bid items to the auction site? Two general ways: First, you can bring the objects directly to the conference, but it helps to have the bid items there early Friday morning or better yet Thursday evening. Since the auction officially begins Friday at 1:00 PM, we try to have a crew in the exhibit area Thursday evening and again early Friday AM, accepting the items and filling out the requisite bid sheets. Second, you can send the items to me or to one of the several point persons who have agreed to receive and transport auction donations. In my next news release I will identify these individuals and supply e-mail addresses.

In the meantime, you can contact me by regular mail, e-mail, or telephone: Howard Dorgan, 747 Stadium Dr., Boone, NC 28607; Phone: 828-264-4361; E-mail: dorganch@charter.net.

Thanks for all of your help!

Howard Dorgan, Professor Emeritus of Communication
Appalachian State University

Director of the UK Appalachian Center

Applications are invited for the position as Director of the University of Kentucky Appalachian Center. Information about the Center and its activities can be found at www.appalachiancenter.org

The UK Appalachian Center is a multi-disciplinary institute created in 1977 to link University of Kentucky resources with Appalachian communities in programs of Research, Outreach, and Teaching. With over twenty-five years of outstanding scholarly service to the Central Appalachian region, the Center has recently had its mission refined and expanded to the following:

The mission of the UK Appalachian Center is to bring the multifaceted expertise related to teaching, research, and service at UK to issues, challenges and opportunities of importance in Appalachia.

The Director will report directly to the Executive Vice President for Research and will be expected to work closely with the deans of the UK colleges in order to foster multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programs of research, outreach, and education. The Director may be eligible to be considered for a faculty appointment in an appropriate department. The successful candidate should have exceptional communication and interpersonal skills and be able to lead the Center to engage all parts of the institution as well as lead in developing and implementing a compelling vision of its research, education and outreach programs. This includes strategic planning and program development, leadership of a comprehensive program of scholarship, coordination of interdisciplinary activities, funding enhancement, and representing the Center to the University administration and associated academic units as well as governmental agencies, industry, and civic organizations. The Director should be able to work well with both a University advisory committee of faculty and administrators as well as a Commonwealth advisory committee more broadly drawn from citizen groups and students from the area.

Candidates must have an earned doctorate in a discipline associated with the areas of interest appropriate to the Center and demonstrate evidence of a well established, internationally recognized program of scholarship and strong administrative experience. This is up to a full-time position.

Interested individuals may review details for applying for the position at www.appalachiancenter.org after Sept. 10, 2004. An application, current resume, cover letter with statement of general administrative philosophy and list of four references will be required to apply for the position.

The University of Kentucky is an equal opportunity university.

Call for 2005 ASA Officer Nominations

Your nominations are needed for ASA Officers and Steering Committee members. The ASA bylaws call for the annual nomination and election of officers. Any member of the association may nominate a fellow member to serve. The Association is seeking nominations for the following elected positions:

The Vice President/President Elect (2005-2006) chairs the nominating committee and negotiates for conference support at future sites. The vice president also becomes president the following year (2006-2007). The president of ASA presides at all meetings, directs fund raising, serves as spokesperson, and serves on the steering committee for one year after his or her term. The president usually resides in the subregion in which the upcoming conference will be held (Southern in 2007).

The Program Vice Chairperson/Chairperson Elect (2005-2006) assists the chairperson, helps organize the next conference, and becomes chairperson the following year (2006-2007). The program chairperson and his or her committee oversee the operation of the annual conference in cooperation with the local arrangements chair and committee. Following his or her term, the program chairperson serves one year on the program committee.

The Treasurer (2005-2008) provides financial oversight of association funds, accounts, and fiscal policy through the administrative office at Marshall University. The administrative office provides the treasurer with a financial statement for all association accounts at least annually. The treasurer presents this statement and an assessment of the financial condition of the association at each annual meeting and as requested by the steering

committee. The treasurer monitors the accounts, reports to the steering committee and fulfills IRS reporting requirements with the assistance of the administrative office.

Three At-Large Members of the Steering Committee (2005-2007) are elected by the membership for two-year terms. There are six at-large members on the steering committee, with three being elected each year. The steering committee members transact any necessary business, form standing committees, and approve the annual budget. The steering committee meets at least twice a year.

Four Program Committee Members (2005-2006) who will help prepare the call for participation, review submitted abstracts, and compile the 2006 conference program. The Program committee includes four at-large members who serve for one year and are elected by the ASA membership.

How to Make a Nomination

1. Make sure the nominee is willing to serve and understands the work involved!
2. Write a one-paragraph biography of the nominee that includes his or her involvement in Appalachian studies and our association. This paragraph will be included with the spring ballot.
3. Send your nominations to ASA Vice President Phil Obermiller, 5137 Salem Hills Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45230 or e-mail him at solotso@aol.com. Please note "ASA Nomination" in the subject line or on the envelope.
4. The deadline for accepting nominations is November 15, 2004.

*Check our website for details about the Radford Conference.
See you there!*

AWARD NOMINATIONS

CARL A. ROSS STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

The Carl A. Ross Appalachian Student Paper Competition is open to students in two categories: middle/high school and undergraduate/graduate students. The authors of the winning papers will receive \$100 each. Costs of attending the conference are the winners' responsibility. All papers must adhere to guidelines for scholarly research. To submit a paper for consideration for the 2005 competition, e-mail a Microsoft Word copy of a 20 to 30-page paper by December 10, 2004, to Tyler Blethen at: blethen@wcu.edu. Students who wish to present their papers at the conference must also submit a Proposal for Participation following the guidelines in the 2005 Call for Participation and Papers (http://www.appalachian_studies.org). Questions should be addressed to Tyler Blethen, Department of History, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723, tel 828-227-3868.

CRATIS D. WILLIAMS/JAMES S. BROWN SERVICE AWARD

The Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award is given to an individual who has made exemplary contributions to Appalachia and/or the ASA. Nominations should include a statement regarding the individual's or organization's specific contributions to the region, accompanied by at least two letters of support. Send nomination materials to Steve Fisher, PO Box BBB, Emory, VA 24327 or to slfisher@ehc.edu before February 1, 2005.

HELEN M. LEWIS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

The Helen M. Lewis Community Service award is given to an individual or an organization that has made exemplary contributions to Appalachia through involvement with and service to its people and communities. Nominations should include a statement regarding the individual or organization's specific contributions to the region or its people, accompanied by at least two letters of support. Send nomination materials to Pat Beaver, Director, Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian State University, University Hall, Boone, NC 28608 or to beaverpd@appstate.edu before February 1, 2005.

e-APPALACHIA AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING WEBSITE

This award is given annually in recognition of an outstanding website that provides insight on Appalachia and its people, or provides a vital community service to Appalachians. Nominations should be sent to Roy Silver at 606-589-2145 x 2069 or at rsilver@uky.edu before February 1, 2005.

WEATHERFORD AWARDS

There are two Weatherford awards: one for books of fiction and poetry; the other for nonfiction works. The only requirement is that the subject matter of the books be Appalachian or that they be set in Appalachia. All nominations for the Weatherford Awards must be made by December 31, 2004. The entries must be originally published in 2004. The nomination and seven copies of each book should be sent to Gordon McKinney, CPO 2166, Berea College, Berea, KY 40404.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

**EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE
OUR CHEROKEE CONFERENCE ONE
OF THE BEST ATTENDED TO DATE!**

**The College of Education and Human
Services at Marshall University for once
again providing additional support for
summer graduate assistants.**



FACES OF APPALACHIA: Studies in Ethnicity and Gender

Honoring Connection

Congratulations! ASA raised \$410.20 at the Cherokee conference for FACES OF APPALACHIA: By making matching donations to the NEH grant, participants honored folks for their contributions to Appalachian Studies.

The ASA continue the Honoring Connection through 2006 to help further research in ethnicity and gender in Appalachia and **endow a new half-time position for ASA. Watch for the upcoming preliminary program for your chance to surprise someone with a blue ribbon and gold star at the Radford conference. Thanks for your continued support.**

Matching Funds

Last year at this time we were able to announce that we had successfully met our annual grant match for Faces of Appalachia, a collaborative effort between ASA and Marshall University to make a strong contribution to a unique area of diversity

scholarship and education. We raised \$150,000, matched by NEH with another \$150,000.

Unfortunately, we cannot say the same this year. Only \$9,475.20 of the \$450,000 needed by the July 31, 2004 deadline was raised this past year. Linda Spatig, co-director of Faces of Appalachia, requested a one year extension and NEH will let us know in October whether or not it has been granted.

Even so, we are optimistic that we will find the funds needed to advance studies in ethnicity and gender in Appalachia. Thank you to all who helped us to plan and strategize our fundraising efforts and to those who gave a monetary contribution. We have a number of positive looking plans in the works and we will keep folks updated about our progress in that regard.

We need your help to make this effort a success! Anyone interested in working with, or contributing ideas, to the NEH advisory committee may contact Linda Spatig by phone: (304) 696-2875 or email: spatig@marshall.edu. Even the smallest donation will have an impact on understanding the contributions of women and ethnic, racial, and religious minorities to the complex culture and history of Appalachia. YOU can help make this happen!

To make a tax-deductible contribution make checks payable to the MUGC Foundation Inc. and send to the Office of Development, MU, One John Marshall Dr., Huntington, WV 25755. Note Faces of Appalachia in the memo.

AWARD WINNERS

2003 Weatherford Award:

Non-Fiction - *Slavery in the American Mountain South* by Wilma A. Dunaway
Fiction and Poetry - *The Midwife's Tale* by Gretchen Moral Laskas

2003 Helen M. Lewis Community Service Award:

Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS) Beards Fork, West Virginia

2003 e-Appalachia Award:

Christiansburg Institute, www.christiansburginstitute.org

2003 Carl A. Ross Student Paper Award:

Emily Satterwhite: "That's What They're All Singing About: Embracing Appalachian Heritage, American Nationalism, and Celtic Pride at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival"

2004 Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award:

Patricia D. Beaver, Director, Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian State University

**TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**

MARCH 18-20, 2005

***VITAL WORDS AND VITAL
ACTIONS: PARTNERSHIPS TO
BUILD A HEALTHY PLACE***

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY
RADFORD, VA**

**MELINDA WAGNER, PRESIDENT
PARKS LANIER, PROGRAM CHAIR
RICKY COX, ARRANGEMENTS CHAIR**

Appalink is published twice a year. We welcome submissions for announcements and news. Subjects may include upcoming conferences, lectures, meetings, fellowships, award nominations, or other events of interest to the membership of the ASA. Submissions should be sent by e-mail or regular mail to Mary Thomas at mthomas@marshall.edu. Space is limited and all submissions are subject to editing. Paid advertisements will be considered for inclusion. Contact the managing editor for rates. Deadline for the spring 2005 edition is 12/06/04.

- * Editor - Mary Jo Graham
- * Managing Editor - Mary Thomas
- * Production Editor - Roxane Dufrene

APPALACHIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

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