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### 1NC - OFF

Psycho K

#### Signifiers such as language remove us from the real world --- that causes alienation when we attempt to fulfill our desires. Therefore, the role of the ballot is to endorse the best model for exposing drives.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson PhD, University of North Carolina, is the author of Desiring the Bomb: Communication, Psychoanalysis, and the Atomic Age. “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive.” 2015. Pp. 45-49.]

Jacques Lacan’s notion of the Real is notoriously difficult to define. In his book on the subject, Tom Eyers calls it the “most elusive” of Lacan’s concepts, but one that is also one that is “central” and “determining” for psychoanalysis (1). There are common elements of the various definitions. First, an agreement that both the economy of tropes that allows the conditions for meaning to emerge (the Symbolic) and the meanings and values invested in these tropes, including the subject itself (the Imaginary), do not and cannot perfectly capture all of existence or experience. Second, this unassimilable remainder structures the Symbolic and Imaginary, just as they structure each other, and thus all three registers are knitted together as demonstrated in Lacan’s famous “Borromean Knot.” The Real is what escapes mediation, what disrupts language itself. To explain its significance and relationship to desire requires examining its foundational role in the formation of the subject. The Real can be understood as the constitutive lack of the subject, its separation from the rest of existence by the self-definition necessary for it to come into being in the first place. This is made clear in the mirror stage, where the subject moves from a fragmented, disorganized concept of the body to the “finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his [sic] entire mental development with its rigid structure” (Lacan, “Mirror Stage” 78). The formation of a discrete subject (a function in the Imaginary register) is a compromise. Its formation allows for participation in the Symbolic because to participate in that economy of exchange requires a “social I” (Lacan, “Mirror stage,” 79). This participation comes at the cost of alienation because the subject trades in a world of symbols which by their nature stand in for what is not present, and thus inescapably mediate the (Real) world outside of the subject, rather than making it present. This lack built in to the subject is the engine of desire: the subject’s divide from an object is a prerequisite for the desire of such an object, but the condition of mediation makes it impossible to ever incorporate it in a perfectly satisfying way. Thus desire remains unfulfilled and each chase for a symbol leads to another in loop which the very constitution of the subject dictates must be endless. This is the basic operation of the death drive which is not distinct from Eros. Were the impossible to occur and the drive of Eros to be fulfilled, it would be extinguished, as there would be nothing left to desire. Thus all drives aim, in a sense, at their own extinction, and therefore there is in a sense only one—the drive that aims towards the extinction of desire through its complete fulfillment in continuity with the world that was lost when the subject became distinct from it in the mirror stage. Although the death drive might stand in for the singular character of the drive, it should not be understood as a desire for the actual biological death of the subject’s body, or even the desire to inflict death on others. The self-destruction of the death drive is a desire to break the limits of the self as the alienating armor of the subject by experiencing unmediated contact with the Real. Death still defines its operation in other ways. The last portion of Lacan’s “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis” explains the metaphorical centrality of death as the center of a torus formed by incessant symbolization. The fort-da game is most significant not because it shows that the child wishes to destroy its mother or even inoculate itself against that possibility, but because it assimilates the child into the Symbolic order through the repetition of the signifiers fort and da, which stand in for presence and absence. Death is central to language because the symbol itself invokes the absence and loss of non- existence since its function is to stand in for something that is gone. Language swirls around this absent center of death, a primordial absence encased in the inner ring of the torus, while the outer surfaces of language hold all else that cannot be symbolized at bay on the outside (Lacan, “Function and Field” 260-264). Paradoxically, death is necessarily evoked by the symbol as that which is absent and also made possible in the first place by that same symbol. The separation of the subject into its alienating identity as a social object makes a meaningful concept of death possible because without it there is no dasein, no individual, no singular human to die. George Bataille explains this with an entomological example. If a scientist picks one fly from a swarm, that fly is subject to death, because its end means the end of the discontinuous being selected by the entomologist. Without differentiation of its members, however, the swarm lives on; the selection of the fly is for the entomologist, not the animal (Bataille, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice” 14-16). Thus it is with human beings. The subject is founded by a rejection of its sole animal nature by participating in a world of work and accumulation, mediated by language—essentially Lacan’s Symbolic. Thus individuals are made discontinuous with the general economy of matter and energy from which all things are formed by a conceptual separation inextricably bound up in death. Our existences are thus defined by discontinuity from a world of continuity, and for Bataille as for Lacan, our drives are singular in the sense that sex is a coupling that unifies with another and momentarily overcomes discontinuity just as death is the end of the subject’s brief separation from a universe differentiated only by the dismembering violence of our imposition of symbols upon it (Bataille, Erotism 13-17). The experience of death may still be unique because it suggests the absence implied by the sign and because it can be experienced only once by the subject—and for obvious reasons, cannot be symbolized by anyone with first-hand experience. As Freud argues in “Thoughts For The Times On War and Death,” we cannot even hope to imagine our own deaths because to do so demands that we imagine them from some perspective which would be destroyed in the experience itself. Death and the Real are therefore not identical, but are closely linked. The most important characteristic of the Real is not just that it suggests existence beyond language, but that this world-for-itself (to borrow from Eugene Thacker) intrudes on human reality and reveals it to be incomplete. Encompassing Max Picard’s concept of silence, the Real is not the absence of human reality so much as the traumatic revelation that that reality was always incomplete, always feigned in the face of existence so much more than human mediation has already covered. Chris Lundberg uses Lacan’s distinction between reality, being the social world of human construction, and the Real, being the occasional but inevitable failure of that reality, to develop his own distinction between failed unicity and feigned unicity. The Symbolic operates as an economy of interconnected and mutually-referential tropes weaving a kind of fabric that is the precondition for meaning, an environment in which social relationships can be understood in context. When the unified illusion of the social fails, we are compelled to stitch the tears in that fabric to maintain the world that gives us meaning (Lacan in Public 2-3). An account by Bill Laurence, the only journalist allowed to witness the Trinity test, provides evidence for this rupture and repair. While “not a sound could be heard” for the period after the flash and before the thunder, Laurence saw civilization itself collapse in an instant: The big boom came about one hundred seconds after the great flash—the first cry of a newborn world. It brought the silent, motionless silhouettes to life, gave them a voice. A loud cry filled the air. The little groups that had hitherto stood rooted to the earth like desert plants broke into a dance—the rhythm of primitive man dancing at one of his fire festivals at the coming of spring. They clapped their hands as they leaped from the ground...The dance of the primitive man lasted but a few seconds, during which an evolutionary period of about 10,000 years telescoped. Primitive man was metamorphosed into modern man—shaking hands, slapping his fellow on the back, all laughing like happy children. (12)

#### The attempt to “fix” class antagonism through struggles for surplus belies a libidinal investment in the phantasy structure of a world without class antagonism that hamstrings solutions

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Here, we see the relevance of calling upon the psychoanalytic category of the real in order to encircle the irreducible status of class antagonism: class antagonism qua real does not refer to the particular antagonisms between the serf and the lord, the proletariat and the capitalist, the slave and the master, or any distributor and recipient of surplus. Rather, class antagonism is the very impossibility of achieving an ideal class structure that can ultimately fix the struggles over living labor: [T]o grasp the notion of antagonism in its most radical dimension, we should invert the relationship between the two terms: it is not the external enemy who is preventing me from achieving identity with myself, but every identity is already in itself blocked, marked by an impossibility, and the external enemy is simply the small piece, the rest of reality upon which we ‘project’ or ‘externalize’ this intrinsic, immanent impossibility. (Zizek, 1990, p 252) The real of class antagonism, therefore, refers to the very impossibility of instituting a class formation that would designate the quantum and the various destinations of surplus-labor once and for all. In fact, various concrete configurations of class positions (the lord and the serf, the employer and the employee, and so on) are socially invented in order to make up for the nonexistence of the class relation. Each and every concrete classed site (a capitalist corporation, a slave plantation, a feudal household, or a worker-owned cooperative) is a complex assemblage of social devices, such as legal constellations, cultural identifications, technologies of production and labor management, accounting practices, social norms, and political ideologies. Through these social inventions or institutional devices, concrete communities try to make up for the absence of a set of rules that would realize a smoothly functioning class relation. We propose to read the totality of the social conditions of in/existence of each form of appropriation of surplus to be structured like a contradictory fantasy formation. 3 Put differently, each concrete class structure, even a particular class antagonism like the one between the ‘‘bosses’’ and the ‘‘workers,’’ is ‘‘already a ‘reactive’ or ‘defense’ formation, an attempt to ‘cope with’ (to come to terms with, to pacifyy) the trauma of class antagonism’’ (Zizek, 1998, p 81). Taking jouissance into account Nevertheless, such domestication can never be fully accomplished. Sooner or later, the real will always erupt and lead to the dissolution of a particular configuration of the social order. This return of the real, however, should not be imagined as an exogenous shock that undermines the smooth functioning of the system. Rather, the destructive forces of the real emerge from within: the Lacanian subject is the subject of jouissance and will do everything to make sure ‘‘to sustain and advance’’ her ‘‘particular relationship to enjoyment’’ (McGowan, 2004, p 3); the subject will ‘‘sacrifice anything and everything (even life itself) for [that] particular Thing’’ (p 5). This is the logic of what Freud called the death drive, and we will return below to explore how it figures in the context of capitalist competition. However, precisely because the subject is a subject of jouissance, and not a subject of rational calculation, this possibility of dissolution should not be overstated. To begin with, we have to assert that there are no pure ‘‘economic interests’’ that are not caught up within, shaped by, and colored with the smear of jouissance. In fact, as class analysts, we find it necessary to take into account the psychic ‘‘investments’’ and fantasy scenarios that organize and impart coherence to the identifications of these classed subjects: ypsychoanalysis [clarifies] the status of this paradoxical jouissance as the payment that the exploited, the servant, receives for serving the Master. This jouissance, of course, always emerges within a certain phantasmic field; the crucial precondition for breaking the chains of servitude is thus to ‘traverse the fantasy’ which structures our jouissance in a way which keeps us attached to the Master F makes us accept the framework of the social relationship of domination. (Zizek, 1997, p 48) By foregrounding the economy of jouissance, by taking into account the particular ways in which classed subjects may also be implicated in the reproduction of the relations of exploitation, psychoanalysis reminds us that the dissemination of the knowledge of class exploitation in itself (e.g., the righteous attitude of ‘‘Speaking truth to power’’) can seldom be enough to occasion class transformation. Something extra, something that takes into account the libidinal economy, something akin to what Zizek calls ‘‘the traversal of fantasy,’’ seems to be necessary to occasion deliberate social transformation that will enable us to break into the future. Up to this point, we have argued that ‘‘class’’ should be conceptualized as the process of performance, appropriation, and distribution of surplus-labor and that there is no ‘‘normal’’ way of instituting it. Moreover, rather than tacking particular modes of subjectivity onto a pre-constituted class structure, we have maintained that particular modes of subjectivity and formations of fantasy constitute the class structure. Yet, we have also argued that all attempts at ‘‘fixing’’ class are bound to fail. In what follows, we argue that there are two distinct modalities of failure. In other words, we will ‘‘sexuate’’ the multiple ways in which communities organize their relation to surplus. In doing so, our aim is to formulate a feminine ethics of ‘‘non-all’’ that will enable us to move beyond the capitalist present and its masculine logic of ‘‘all.’’

#### Existentialism’s attempt to define truth stabilizes the subject and feeds into Otherisation

Gildersleeves 16 [Matthew Gildersleeve, School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, The University of Queensland. “Method In the Madness: Hysteria and the Will to Power.” July 12, 2016. https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:400599]

As a result, truth as what is permanent and fixed is not the highest value for life’s preservation and enhancement and therefore Nietzsche says “To transform the belief ‘it is thus and thus’ into the will ‘it shall become thus and thus’” ([1], p. 65). This is also the belief of the hysteric who is not satisfied with “it is thus and thus” as noted by many authors. For example, Klepec pronounces “the hysteric is allergic to mastery” ([11], p. 126) and Salecl says “the main problem for the hysteric is that those who incarnate authority are never fully up to the mark, hence the typical dissatisfaction of the hysteric and his or her ever-shifting desire” ([57], p. 137). Finally the hysteric’s “radical doubt and questioning, his entire being is sustained by the uncertainty” ([58], p. 91) of the master’s belief “it is thus and thus” is highlighted by Johnston who says “the discourse of the master is grounded on a gesture of identification (‘That’s me!’), whereas the discourse of the hysteric is grounded on a gesture of dis-identification (‘That’s not me!’)” ([26], p. 260). The “truth” of the master is not the highest value for life because it fixes beings to be decided, “it is thus,” and therefore “it denies life’s vitality, its will to self-transcendence and becoming” ([1], p. 66). Hysteria adheres to value the world as becoming and art as higher than the true world of being as what is fixed and unchanging. The hysteric’s “relationship to the Other (the symbolic order, the law) is one of perpetual questioning” ([41], p. 34) of the belief “it is thus”. By valuing the world of vitality and becoming “the hysterical position opens up the possibility for change” ([41], p. 34) of the belief “it is thus”. As a result, hysteria does not deny “life’s vitality, its will to self-transcendence” because it aims to discover the lack/gap in the belief “it is thus” of the master. This occurs through the hysterical questioning of the master and this opens the door for the analysand to “come to a point at the end of analysis when he does not hystericize himself in the same way and does not expect from the Other a word about his being” ([59], p. 89). Importantly this could not occur if hysteria valued “it is thus” Soc. Sci. 2016, 5, 29 9 of 25 of the master, the “true world” and what is fixed and unchanging. This explains the necessity of the hystericisation of the subject in psychoanalysis.

#### Their politics can only lead to an endless quest for jouissance that causes ressentiment and psychic violene.

Hook 17 [Derek Hook; Duquesne University and University of Pretoria; “What Is ‘Enjoyment as a Political Factor’?” *Political Psychology;* 2017; Date Accessed: 27 July 2019.] DG

Jouissance of the Drive We can now add a further qualification, namely that jouissance and affect should not be equated. It is more accurate to understand jouissance as a mode of intensity, a type of arousal—a thrilling twist—that occurs when affect moves beyond the bounds of what is comfortable, reasonable, or satisfying. Bearing this in mind prevents us from making the error of thinking jouissance as itself a variety of affect that permits for easy categorization (as in types such as anger, frustration, joy, etc.). Enjoyment should not be delimited in thus way; it is neither a subcategory of affect nor the preserve of a limited range of affects. We can further refine our understanding of the concept by stressing, as Lacan (1992), that **“jouissance appears not purely and simply as the satisfaction of a need, but as the satisfaction of a drive”** (p. 209). Furthermore, any drive impulse—be it “blind” physiological sensation or a more overly “goal-directed” activity—can serve as the basis of jouissance. It helps here to signal the omnipresence of enjoyment in everyday life, to indicate that any drive activity—”drive” understood here as the psychical elaboration of pressing bodily impulses—is linked to the pursuit of jouissance. **We should evoke here the notion of the death drive**; doing so allows us to offer a succinct formulation: [J]ouissance is a form of enjoyment willing to exceed the parameters of life. Miller (1992) is once again instructive: To understand the concept of jouissance in Lacan as unique is to understand “that it concerns at the same time libido and death drive, libido and aggression, not as two antagonistic forces external to one another, but as a knot” (pp. 25–26). Lacan (2007) goes so far as to declare that **jouissance is “the path towards death”** (p. 17), a comment which calls to mind Freud’s earlier (1924) observation that “even the subject’s destruction of himself cannot take place without libidinal satisfaction” (p. 170). This opens a further dimension of the concept, which, as we will go on to see, must be related both to the notions of the law and the superego. Hence, Eagleton’s (2003) description of jouissance as “the lethal pleasure of Freud[’s] primary masochism, in which we reap delight from the way that the law or superego unleashes its demented sadism upon us” (p. 198). Jouissance, then, to review the key points made above is: (1) diametrically opposed to pleasure and desire; (2) bodily and subliminal rather than unconscious in nature; (3) less an affect than an excess of affect, a mode of intensity produced by pursuing drive impulses; (4) necessarily “negative” (excessive, traumatic) in the sense that it is inflected with the death drive; (5) takes the form of contravention (is transgressive) inasmuch as it pushes the subject painfully (enjoyably) beyond the law or socially prescribed limits. “Negative Dialectics” Our own enjoyment—let alone that of others—is, for the most part, repulsive to us, and needs to be kept at arm’s length. The subject’s stance regards their own enjoyment is thus necessarily conflicted. Jouissance exacerbates the split in the subject who at once reviles their enjoyment and yet, periodically, succumbs to it. So, ordinary (neurotic) subjects want more jouissance, feels they deserve more enjoyment than they are receiving, and yet they are also appalled and repulsed by it, more readily identifying it in the deplorable enjoyments of others. Contrary then to the tendency to view enjoyment within the frame of isolated individuality, we need rather approach it in terms of prospective relations to others. Jouissance, insists Macey (1988), “is not...a category of pure subjectivity” (p. 203). Rather, it implies “a dialectic of possession and enjoyment of and by the other” (p. 203). The revulsion we feel toward our own jouissance is, as already noted, all too readily displaced onto others (as Lacan [1992] laments in Seminar VII: “[W]hat is more of a neighbor to me than this...my jouissance...which I don’t dare go near” [p. 186]). These **others**, moreover, **are always ready to blame for having too much jouissance**, for having procured improper or malignant enjoyments that appear to compromise given social or cultural norms or laws. Given neurotic subjects’ presumption that they have surrendered a crucial quantity of enjoyment—an effect of socialization, of the symbolic overwriting the bodily experience of drives—they maintain a preexisting condition of resentment toward such enjoying others. Differently put: **This resentment comes before, and thus in a sense determines, what the subject perceives to be the illegitimate or disproportionate enjoyments of others.** The perceived existence of jouissance thus implies a social relationship, one that exists before the other upon whom this jouissance will be projected. So, what even the most elementary experience of jouissance necessitates is a type of hating object-relation, a conflicted mode of intersubjectivity, which is always already there, prior to the racial/cultural/social other who will be assigned a position in this negative interpersonal dialectic. The construction of otherness is thus not merely an effect of social construction. It involves also a libidinal component, a prior attribution of stolen enjoyment, a readymade form of resentment awaiting a blameworthy subject upon whom this crime can be pinned. Enjoyment in the Form of Lack Jouissance, certainly once approached as a type of possession, exhibits an odd characteristic: It is never more real than when we have been dispossessed of it. Enjoyment, that is to say, comes most forcefully into being, is most intensely experienced, when: (1) It is seen to be in the possession of others, or (2) when it is perceived as endangered, about to be snatched away. Put differently**, jouissance seems most typically to exist in an “already stolen” or precarious state; it only takes form in the shadow of a potential castration.** This helps us understand Vighi’s (2010) initially puzzling description. Jouissance, he says, is a type of libidinal excess, most typically experienced as a lack. This experience of surplus, he insists, corresponds to a void: “[E]very enjoyment is structured around a lack...a paradoxical lack of enjoyment” (p. 25). Furthermore: We perceive enjoyment not as lack but as fullness, a ubiquitous substance that fills our lives and gives it meaning. Here we are faced by what we might call the “enjoyment parallax,” with parallax naming the different aspects of the same object viewed from...different lines of sight. **Although enjoyment in its deepest connotation is always a lack, we...perceiv[e] it as fullness.** (p. 25) This facet of enjoyment—that it oscillates between surplus and absence, a “too much” and a “not enough”—once again highlights the intersubjective aspect of the concept. Moreover, if it is the case, as Vighi (2010) argues, that attributions of enjoyment invariably spring from the experience of lack, then it is unsurprising that this lack should be allocated a cause, and, more importantly yet, a suspect who is responsible for this lack. Jouissance, that is to say, entails an elementary narrative component. The most rudimentary experience of **jouissance implies** already therole—the **fantasy**—**of a culprit, someone who enjoys more than I,** or who is poised to steal the little enjoyment that I do possess. One of the most articulate expressions of this idea is offered by Stavrakakis (1999) who insists that the festivals of jouissance by means of which we constitute our “national ways of enjoyment” are always in some way lacking: No matter how much we love our national ways of enjoyment, our national real, this real is never enough, it is already castrated... this loss can be attributed to the existence of an alien culture or people: the enjoyment lacking from our national community is being denied to us because “they” stole it.... What is not realised within such a schema is the fact...**that we never had at our disposal the surplus enjoyment that we accuse the Other of stealing.** (p. 156) The modes of jouissance that we have been discussing cannot be dismissed merely as individual or idiosyncratic quirks (which, of course, is not to say there will not be considerable latitude in terms of how these forms of enjoyment are experienced by individuals). How though is this “structured” quality of enjoyment to be explained? This is a particularly important question given that the notion of jouissance as developed in the clinic is always attuned to the singularity of a subject’s enjoyment.

#### Thus, the alt is to let go. The process of accepting limitations allows us to reclaim the surplus, accepting our boundaries, and re-orient anti-capitalist struggles through a communist axiom.

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In these passages, we find a Marx that traverses the Lockean fantasy that organizes our relationship towards surplus qua objet petit a. When he enumerates the series of social expenses one by one and refuses to impose an exception that would condition the list, we find a Marx that lets go of the surplus. The relation to surplus that Marx describes in these passages is neither one of desire (for surplus qua lost object) nor one of deadly drive (for the expansion of value). In this sense, we read Marx’s Critique as an invitation to communists to re-orient their relation to surplus, to traverse the fantasy of ‘‘fixing’’ class. But how can we concretize this vision? How could it inform concrete political struggles today? To begin with, we should refrain from defining communism as a social utopia that promises to deliver what the bourgeois program of equality has failed to achieve. Why should we turn communism into an unrealizable ideal, an unachievable end point, a utopian destination, that promises to accomplish something that no conceivable social order – let alone bourgeois – can ever fulfill? Why should we burden the communist project with such an unattainable task of delivering the impossible fullness of community? In contrast, we propose to define communism explicitly as a starting point, a principle, an axiom that asserts that no one can have exclusive rights over the dispatching of the surplus. 5 An important condition of possibility of this social reclaiming of surplus is precisely its psychic letting go. Blatant presumptuousness that makes exploitation possible will become perceivable only if we let go of the idea that the right to enjoy surplus can be exclusive. This is what we mean by traversing the fantasy in the context of class transformation. Once this shift in perspective is achieved, it would become possible for us to assert the axiom of communism on each occasion when communist class structures are being instituted, rendering each concrete communism always inconsistent and ultimately a failed attempt. In fact, we think that the axiom of communism is already addressed in many of the decisions of collective enterprises that pertain to the division of labor, business expansion, use of workspace, remuneration, and distribution. In some cases of worker cooperatives, for instance, decisions are rigorously debated and assumed with reference to a contestable notion of ‘‘fairness’’ that implicates not only the existing and potential members, but also the broader community (Byrne and Healy, 2003). In fact, such cooperatives are distinguished from others by their fidelity to a ‘‘politics of antagonism’’ (Byrne and Healy, 2003) and commitment to an ‘‘ethical economy’’ (Gibson-Graham, 2003). For us, such characterizations of collective enterprises are intimately linked to the question of whether and to what extent the axiom of communism is exercised over the appropriation and distribution of communal surplus. Equally important though is to hold up the axiom of communism against the capitalist-all, that is, on each occasion when someone or some social group claims his/her/their right to participate in the negotiation of the capitalist surplus. Since there is nothing inherently wrong about surplus, it is possible to make use of it for purposes that do not necessarily reproduce the capitalist-all. In fact, such acts of reclaiming are always happening within contemporary capitalist formations. Whenever governments levy taxes on corporate profits to finance public services, or whenever ecological movements force corporations to clean up, the surplus is socially reclaimed. While it is quite tempting to read these ‘‘acts of reclaiming’’ to be in the service of an enlightened and ‘‘green’’ capitalist-all, the struggle, as we see it, is precisely over how these acts are socially signified. In the absence of a counterhegemonic nodal point, these disparate ‘‘acts of reclaiming’’ could indeed easily be co-opted by the capitalist-all. We believe that the axiom of communism could serve as a useful counter-hegemonic nodal point that would impart a ‘‘surplus’’ meaning to each and every act of reclaiming. Overdetermined by the axiom of communism, each act of reclaiming will have at least two meanings: on the one hand, it will be a particular act of reclaiming with a concrete goal, and on the other hand, it will be a particular instance of the universal contestation of the exception of appropriation that sustains the capitalist-all.