Hardy–Littlewood–Sobolev inequality for $p = 1$

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Consider the Riesz potential $I_\alpha$, where $\alpha \in (0, d)$,

$$I_\alpha[f](x) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} |\xi|^{-\alpha} \hat{f}(\xi) e^{2\pi i \langle x, \xi \rangle} \, d\xi, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^d, \ f \in L_1(\mathbb{R}^d).$$
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In other words, $I_\alpha$ is a convolutional operator whose kernel is homogeneous of order $\alpha - d$

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$$I_\alpha[f](x) = c_{d,\alpha} \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} \frac{f(x - y) \, dy}{|y|^{d-\alpha}}, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^d.$$

This operator appears frequently in the study of PDE (it might be though of as "inverse differentiation"), or in geometric measure theory (to measure dimension of sets), or in many other places.
Theorem (Hardy–Littlewood–Sobolev inequality)

The operator $I^\alpha$ is bounded as an $L^p$ to $L^q$ mapping if and only if

$$1/p - 1/q = \alpha d$$

and

$$1 < p < q < \infty.$$

$$\|I^\alpha[f]\|_{L^q(\mathbb{R}^d)} \lesssim \|f\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^d)}.$$
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HLS for $p = 1$
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\[ \| I_\alpha[f] \|_{L_q} \lesssim \| f \|_{L_1}, \quad q = \frac{d}{d - \alpha}, \]

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the inequality fails. Indeed, if we plug $f = \delta_0$ (which is formally illegal), we get $I_\alpha [\delta_0](x) = c_{d,\alpha} |x|^{\alpha - d}$. 

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**Theorem (Classical Sobolev embedding)**

If \( \frac{1}{p} - \frac{1}{q} = \frac{1}{d} \) and \( 1 < p < q < \infty \), then

\[ \|f\|_{L^q} \lesssim \|\nabla f\|_{L^p}, \quad f \in \mathcal{C}^\infty_0(\mathbb{R}^d). \]
What about $p = 1$?

In 1959 (20 years after Sobolev), Gagliardo and Nirenberg proved (among other interesting things) the limit case $p = 1$ for the Sobolev embedding:

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\|f\|_{L^{d-d-1}} \lesssim \|\nabla f\|_{L^1},
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$f \in C_\infty^0(\mathbb{R}^d)$.

Using the Calderón–Zygmund theory (or rather the Mikhlin multiplier theorem), this may be restated as

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\|I_1[g]\|_{L^{d-d-1}} \lesssim \|g\|_{L^1},
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$g = \nabla f$.

Recall that HLS fails for $p = 1$ when tested against a delta measure.

In a sense, the Gagliardo–Nirenberg inequality says that the vectorial expression $\nabla f$ cannot concentrate as well as delta measures do.
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So it is natural to ask: ”For what spaces (classes of functions) \( W \) does the inequality

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**Theorem (Hardy and Littlewood, 1927)**

*The inequality*

$$\| l_{1/2} f \|_{L^2(\mathbb{R})} \lesssim \| f \|_{L^1(\mathbb{R})}, \quad \hat{f}(\xi) = 0, \quad \xi < 0,$$

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holds true.

In modern terms this may be stated as $I_\alpha : H_1 \to L^d$, where $H_1$ is either complex or the real Hardy class (Stein–Weiss inequality).
More examples: Bourgain–Brezis inequalities

Yet another example was found about twenty years ago by Bourgain and Brezis:

\[ \| I_1[g] \|_{L^d_{d-1}} \lesssim \| g \|_{L^1}, \quad \text{div} \, g = 0. \]
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So here \( g \) is a vector field on \( \mathbb{R}^d \) and vectorial behavior is important (as in the Gagliardo–Nirenberg inequality).

**Theorem (Van Schaftingen, 2011)**

The inequality

\[ \| I^1[g] \|_{L^\frac{d}{d-1}(\mathbb{R}^d)} \lesssim \| g \|_{L^1(\mathbb{R}^d)}, \quad Ag = 0, \]

where \( A \) is a homogeneous elliptic differential operator holds true if and only if the space \( * - \text{clos}_{\text{Meas}}(\{ Ag = 0 \mid g \in C^\infty_0(\mathbb{R}^d) \}) \) does not contain vectorial delta measures.
Let $\mathcal{W}$ be a closed linear subspace of $S'(\mathbb{R}^d, \mathbb{R}^\ell)$ that is invariant under translations and dilations, let $\alpha \in (0, d)$. The constant in the inequality

$$\| I_\alpha[f] \|_{L^d_{d-\alpha}} \lesssim \| f \|_{L^1}, \quad f \in \mathcal{W},$$

is uniform with respect to all $f \in \mathcal{W}$, for which the right hand side is finite, if and only if $\mathcal{W}$ does not contain the charges $a \otimes \delta_0$, $a \in \mathbb{R}^\ell \setminus \{0\}$. 
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For those analysts who are interested, we may replace the space $L^\frac{d}{d-\alpha}$ on the left with a finer space $L^\frac{d}{d-\alpha}, 1$; this solves several open problems going back to Van Schaftingen and even Bourgain–Brezis (here I am glad to mention that Hernandez and Spector solved B.-B. conjecture independently).
Couple of words about the proof

It seems that the method is completely new, and we first used it with Rami Ayoush and Michal Wojciechowski to solve a similar problem for martingales.
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$$\| H[\mu](\cdot, t) \|_{L_p(\mathbb{R}^d)} \leq t^{-\frac{d(p-1)}{2p}} + \delta \| H[\mu](\cdot, 1) \|_{L_p(\mathbb{R}^d)}.$$
One then has to decompose $f$ into parts where it resembles a measure in

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Thank you!