

COURSE INFORMATION:

The Arts and Politics of the Situationist International (1957-2), THEOCRIT 9460B
Online every Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (a 15-minute video documentary/lecture
will be posted every Monday)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Arts and Politics of the Situationist International situates the SI within a comprehensive social, political and cultural framework that restores its theoretical concepts and practical activities to their rightful origins and aligns its work with previous critical thinkers, political activists and poets. Despite efforts to disavow its own intellectual and artistic roots, the SI still belongs to a larger history of radical gestures and cultural practices concerned with re-imagining everyday life. The

Students will submit a "Short Paper" around Module 4. The Short Paper should be considered a initial draft of what will become the major "Research Paper." The "Seminar presentations," which will begin around Module 5, will allow students to present initial ideas, concepts, and/or preliminary conclusions. The 10

Modules 6-7 Dada and Surrealist Strategies in SI Practices

Dada and Surrealist avant-garde strategies influenced the SI, namely, a critique against excessive bourgeois reification and rationality. For its part, the SI shared similar roots; yet, it also had a contentious relationship with both movements because it sought to combine artistic production with a critical and dialectical form of social revolution that would actualize and transcend both art and philosophy.

Modules 8-9 Hegelian-Marxism in SI Political Theory

The Situationists developed an integrated critique regarding reification, alienation and the relentless spectacle and commodification of post-World War II capitalist society. The SI not only appropriated and revitalized these earlier strategies but also radically politicized them under the larger rubric of 'revolutionary' praxis. In particular, it shifted its perspective from that of applying praxis as the concrete application of revolutionary theory to that of elaborating an historically-grounded theory of praxis.

Modules 10-11 Social Theory and 'Unitary Urbanism'

The SI's multifaceted critique of alienation of post-World War II capitalist society is placed into a wider sociological and cultural context (1) into the general rubric of "unitary urbanism" and how it relates partly to urban architecture and 'play,' and partly to the possibilities of experiencing new instances of *dérive* and psychogeography; (2) into a revised notion of 'everyday life' and identify how this social grouping evolved.