



# Constructed Situations: A New History of the Situationist International (Marxism and Culture)

*Frances Tracey*

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## **Constructed Situations: A New History of the Situationist International (Marxism and Culture)**

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The Situationist International were a group of anti-authoritarian, highly cultured, revolutionary artists whose energy and engagement fundamentally shaped the revolutions of the late 1960's, most famously in Paris in May '68. They took on their shoulders the history of the workers' struggle, saw that it had been corrupted by authoritarianism and transformed it, with influences incorporating the avant-garde via Dada and Surrealism. They were not Marxologists, defenders of the faith. Marxism came back to life in their raging analyses, the use of the 'spectacle' and at the heart of the project was the idea of the constructed situation.

This book by Frances Stracey offers itself up as the 'first historiography of constructed situations'. Within it are new insights into the movement, and with them, a sense of relevance to political situations and practice today. As an archivist, Stracey uncovered new documents which, amongst other things, revealed how the SI related to representations of sexuality; and is able to discuss whether they could be considered as feminists or not. She also looked at their famous motto 'Never Work' and again shows how alienated labour is even more relevant to us today.

*Constructing Situations* is not a history of celebrated personalities, or cultural influences, or political circumstances. It is instead an open door to one of the most influential art movements in modern history, and an invitation for us to reclaim inspiration from this ubiquitous movement.

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