

# CLASS WARGAMES

PRESENT

## GUY DEBORD'S THE GAME OF WAR

“Politics is a continuation of war by other means.”

The Game of War is a Clausewitz simulator: a Napoleonic-era military strategy game where armies must maintain their communications structure to survive – and where victory is achieved by smashing your opponent's supply network rather than by taking their pieces.

“The 1789 French Revolution brought great changes in the art of war. Similarly, the establishment of spectacular domination has radically altered the art of government.”

Guy Debord is celebrated as the leader of the Situationist International and as the author of the searing critique of the media-saturated society of consumer capitalism: *The Society of the Spectacle*. What is much less well known is that after the May '68 Revolution, Debord and his partner – Alice Becker-Ho – quit Paris and went to live in a remote French village. Over the next two decades, Debord devoted much of the rest of his life to inventing, refining and promoting what he came to regard as his most important project: *The Game of War*.

“Wargames are a continuation of politics by other means.”

For Debord, *The Game of War* wasn't just a game – it was a guide to how people should live their lives within Fordist society. By playing this Clausewitz simulator, revolutionary activists could learn how to fight and win against the oppressors of spectacular society.

“An untrained militant would only be an object of embarrassment to the vanguard.”

Now, in 2007, Debord's fascination with wargames is finally being discovered. Coinciding with the publication by Atlas Press of the English translation of Debord and Becker-Ho's *The Game of War* book, *Class Wargames* in London and the Radical Software Group in New York are playing matches in public and developing their own versions of the game.

Tonight *Class Wargames* will play Guy Debord's *The Game of War* using a replica of his original 1977 design for the board game.

*Class Wargames* are:

Rod Dickinson (artist), Dr Richard Barbrook (media theorist, University of Westminster), Lucy Blake (interaction designer), Ilze Black (curator, Watermans Arts Centre), Fabian Tompsett (*Class War*) and Alex Veness (artist).

Let battle commence!