

OPEN SOURCE

Instructions for Intervention in Public Space

Method for a Public Intervention

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Find somebody you believe is damaging public dialogue. Try to replace them.

Depending on the scale of your project, you will need varying amounts of

Time

Money

Chutzpah

Sincerity

If the person you are attempting to replace is a politician or a wealthy media baron, your intervention will take a considerable amount of time and devotion, and there is a good chance it will fail, though probably in interesting ways. If the person is a teacher or administrator of some sort, your intervention will appear more like you being good at your job, which is fine if you like your job.

I recommend operating on a smaller scale, like trying to replace a tour guide who glosses over histories of exploitation and appropriation in order to sell the spectacle of a city, or a security guard who protects an empty lot or sidewalk from the scourge of trespassers trying to find shelter or a quiet place to rest.

I do not want to suggest that you attempt to replace somebody by getting them fired, although if it's possible to get people fired from jobs they're performing to the detriment of a wider social sphere, don't hesitate on my account. By replacement I mean mimicking, or masquerading as: operating alongside but with opposing goals. So if you become a security guard, this would mean providing access to property. If you become a tourist guide, it means offering information that gives some insight into power structures and representation.

You will need time to research your ground, whether it be a city, neighborhood, building, or economy. You will also need time to receive the training required to either be hired into a position you will likely be quickly fired from (this could take two weeks, two months, or longer based on there scale of your project), or to adequately masquerade as the figure you have selected.

You will need money for the training, should you pursue that route, because most jobs require their applicants to build up a debt in the very application process in order that they will be more desperate to work. If you are applying for a job knowing that you will be fired, or that you will quit, you must have enough money or enough support to be able to forgo payment for your work. In this case, as in most cases, it is best to be wealthy. If you can't be wealthy, be a graduate student, or on unemployment benefits. If you are neither wealthy nor a graduate student nor on benefits, be in love with poverty, but not so much that a potential employer might notice, or else they won't feel they can wield any power over you.

Do the job for however long you can stand it. Be sincere. Consult a lawyer in case you get arrested, keep notes, and talk about the project to whoever will listen. Try to improve things.