

A study in community interactions.



A Study in Community Interactions

An Intervention by Laura Bucci
Performed in Vancouver, Canada
January - March 2016

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Preface

In January 2016, I started mailing a series of four mail art postcards to several individuals—friends, family, and acquaintances. I created the postcards to serve as documentation for a project (Cultivate a Spot). I thought also, that the postcards would serve the purpose of letting someone know what I was up to, instead of the usual postcard saying “Hi, how are you? I’m fine.” I was interested in receiving reactions to my project. I hoped I would receive postcards back with comments and questions—to date, I received two postcards.

The project is described in the image and text of the following pages. But I want to say here what is not included there...that the original intended location for the project was an abandoned site for a monument in my neighbourhood, on Clark Drive and North Grandview Highway. I have dealt with this site in an earlier project¹ but wanted to return to it to address issues about public space and collective memory. When I went to scope out the site, I noticed something had changed. The original stone pedestal had been replaced with a taller, metal one, which was far too tall for me to place anything on top. I also wasn’t sure that there would be enough foot traffic to notice my food offerings. The plan was simply to leave food on the pedestal and to check back to see if anyone had taken the food. I began to brainstorm other public spaces suitable for leaving food. The red telephone booth on Parker Street and Commercial Drive popped into my head.

During the Christmas holidays, I had been reading *Double Game* by Sophie Calle and Paul Auster.² So I think that’s where I got the idea of using the telephone booth for this project. After I scoped out the location, I realized I could also incorporate proper observation into my project criteria, somewhat like Calle had done for some of her projects. It is the first time I have incorporated observation in my practice. I wanted to see what I would learn from the process. I was also curious to find out how passersby would react to the unexpected encounter and what deductions I could make from my observations about people in the public space. My discoveries and other thoughts are in the following pages.

Laura Bucci
Vancouver, Canada
March 2016

¹ Bucci, Laura. *Here Today*, Britannia Art Gallery. Vancouver, Canada. 1 Aug. – 31 Aug. 2012.
² Calle, Sophie, and Paul Auster. *Double Game*. New York: Violette Editions, 2007.



Jan 15 2016: I buy apples at Santa Barbara Market. The amborosia’s are a good price and they’re local. I get 8 but later realize I can only fit 6 in the basket. I buy hooks at Home Hardware and a wire basket at Wonderbucks. **Laura Bucci** #41-1507 East 2nd Avenue Vancouver BC V5N 1C8 Canada

January 16 Saturday, 12:40 PM: I’m at the telephone booth on Parker Street at Commercial Drive. I install the basket and 6 apples. It only takes me a minute; then I pull out my camera to take some shots. I step outside. I think it looks like I’ve chanced upon the apples. An elderly man walking by slows down and looks at my subject. I finish taking the photos and walk away. He goes around the corner and in a smooth snakelike movement his hand reaches in and grabs an apple! (There is no glass in the structure.) Many people walking by stop and lean forward to take a look. I’m standing at a spot where I can observe and not be noticed.

12:50 PM: A kid takes a photo.
1:01 PM: A man with his baby in a stroller takes a photo; then another man. Where will these photos go? Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook? #freeapples?
1:06 PM: A man stops in front of the booth, looks at the apples, looks down at his phone, walks away. Not worth a picture?
1:11 PM: A man and a woman stop by, peek in. The man sticks his arm through one of the openings. Another apple gone! No one has actually pulled the door open yet.
1:15 PM: I think I am profiling people. Who might take an apple, who definitely won’t?
1:28 PM: A father and kid notice the apples. The kid steps in. Does not take an apple. Two punky girls look in. One steps in, takes an apple, steps out! Then the other steps in, and a little photo shoot ensues.
1:39 PM: I am cold! No one has noticed me. Occasionally I look at my cell phone to make it appear as if I am waiting for someone.
1:49 PM: Just over an hour. I leave. Three apples left.
4:30 PM: I take a walk to the phone booth with my dog Carrie. One apple left!
8:00 PM: Another walk with Carrie and my partner, Lenny. Apples gone and the basket is still there! I retrieve it. I am pleased that enough people were not too paranoid about taking these free apples. The telephone booth is perfect! If it were you, would you take one of these apples?

Cultivate a Spot #1



The mail art postcards I created and sent to several people.



SATURDAY JANUARY 12, 2016
(Originally sent as a postcard to several people)

In 1994 Paul Auster (author) wrote "Personal Instructions for SC on How to Improve Life in New York City (Because she asked...)"* SC is Sophie Calle (a French artist) who moved to New York City for a short period of time. Auster gave SC four instructions; one of them was called "Cultivate a Spot" and it asked that SC "pick one spot in the city and begin to think of it as [hers]." Sophie Calle picked a phone booth.

While Sophie Calle's work often "depicts human vulnerability, and examines identity and intimacy," in my work my thoughts turn to public space and inter-human relations.

In homage to Paul Auster and Sophie Calle, I decided to call this project "Cultivate a Spot." In "Cultivate a Spot," I decide to perform some actions (deposit some food) in an antique, empty (out-of-service), red telephone booth in my neighbourhood (Parket Street at Commercial Drive). In this experiment, I will observe how people will interact with this chance encounter, and I will document what I see.

The plan is to deposit something on 3 different occasions. I will leave apples, pota-

to chips, and cans of beans. That's all I have planned for now but things may change and evolve. I'll report back after each event.

If at any time you have questions or comments for me, please send them along, preferably via postcard.

* Auster, Paul and Sophie Calle. Sophie Calle *Double Game*. New York: Violette Limited, 2007.

"...art becomes recognized as art through a way of being or appearing that is different from ordinary forms of sensory experience"

Patricia Reed on Rancière

#1



I left a note with the apples, it said: Free local Ambrosia apples. Enjoy!

FRIDAY JANUARY 15, 2016

(Original version sent as a postcard to several people)

I buy apples at Santa Barbara Market. The ambrosia's are a good price and they're local. I get 8 but later realize I can only fit 6 in the basket. I buy hooks at Home Hardware and a wire basket at Wonderbucks.

SATURDAY JANUARY 16, 2016

12:40 P.M. I'm at the telephone booth on Parker Street at Commercial Drive. I install the basket and 6 apples. It only takes me a minute; then I pull out my camera to take some shots. I step outside. I think it looks like I've chanced upon the apples. An elderly man walking by slows down and looks at my subject. I finish taking the photos and walk away. He walks around the booth and in a smooth snakelike movement his hand reaches in and grabs an apple! (There is no glass in the structure.) Many people walking by stop and lean forward to take a look. I'm standing at a spot where I can observe and not be noticed.

12:50 P.M. A kid takes a photo.

1:01 P.M. A man with his baby in a stroller takes a photo; then another man. Where will these photos go? Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook?

#freeapples?

1:06 P.M. A man stops in front of the booth, looks at the apples, looks down at his phone, walks away. Not worth a picture?

1:11P.M. A man and a woman stop by, peek in. The man sticks his arm through one of the openings. Another apple gone! No one has actually pulled the door open yet.

1:15 P.M. I think I am profiling people. Who might take an apple, who definitely won't?

1:28 P.M. A father and kid notice the apples. The kid steps in. Does not take an apple. Two punky girls look in. One steps in, takes an apple, steps out! Then the other steps in, and a little photo shoot ensues.

1:39 P.M. I am cold! No one has noticed me. Occasionally I look at my cell phone to make it appear as if I am waiting for someone.

1:49 P.M. Just over an hour. I leave. Three apples left.

4:30 P.M. I take a walk to the phone booth with my dog Carrie. One apple left!

8:00 P.M. Another walk with Carrie and my partner, Lenny. Apples gone and the basket is still there! I retrieve it. I am pleased that enough people were not too paranoid about taking these free apples. The telephone booth is perfect! If it were you, would you take one of these apples?

#YVR

#freeapples

#CommercialDrive

#RedTelephoneBooth

#BritishTelephoneBooth

#2



I left a note with the chips, it said: You can't have apples everyday, have a treat instead. Enjoy! L.

SATURDAY JANUARY 23, 2016
(Original version sent as a postcard to several people)

12:12 P.M. I install the wire basket and bags of chips. I bought 5 but can only fit 4. I am nervous, so I do it very quickly. I pull out my camera and take photos. I retreat to my observation spot, notepad and pen ready. Thankfully, it's warmer today.

12:18 P.M. A father and kid spot the chips. The kid goes inside, the father takes a picture. No chips taken! A guy walking is singing "more than a woman could mean..."

12:25 P.M. Another guy walking by me...I'm sure I saw him last week. He has a black eye patch. I think he has come from the gym.

12:35 P.M. A group of 4 adults approach the booth, but only 3 look closely. A father & kid look in. The kid goes in and takes photos.

12:38 P.M. A woman with a stroller stops and takes photos. Hmmm, I think "I am documenting her, documenting my action."

12:42 P.M. A man walks past the booth. Comes back, takes photos.

12:50 P.M. Several people are taking a very close look. Bodies bent forward.

12:55 P.M. A man stares at the chips for a while. Puts his right arm through one of the openings

(remember, the glass is all gone) and grabs 3 bags!!! He walks 10 metres and stops. Opens one bag, glances over to the booth. I can feel him thinking that he should go back for the last one. He doesn't. He doesn't look homeless, but how does one ever know?

1:10 P.M. One bag left. I leave for the day.

8:30 P.M. Carrie, Lenny, and I go for a walk and check on the booth. No chips left. Great! I retrieve the basket and hooks. Everytime, I wonder if the basket will be gone.

Total number of people engaged during the first 43 minutes:

People observed looking closely: about 20

Post-Action: I had expected the chips to be popular. I also thought that because they are in a closed package, that people might feel comfortable taking them but that did not seem to be the case. Perhaps people feel more trusting when something is from someone's garden. After all, one doesn't normally leave packages of food outside for others. We are used to the idea that if we want to donate food, we take it to an organization, but why couldn't there be public spaces that the community spontaneously uses to donate or share food, from one citizen to another?

We are used to the idea that if we want to donate food, we take it to an organization, but why couldn't there be public spaces that the community spontaneously uses to donate or share food, from one citizen to another?



I left a note with the beans, it said: Beans, beans, the magical flute, the more you eat, the more you toot. The more you toot, the better you feel, so eat beans at every meal. Enjoy!

SATURDAY JANUARY 30, 2016

(Original version sent as a postcard to several people)

1:35 P.M. Today I am leaving four cans of beans. Two are beans in tomato sauce and two are deep-browned beans in tomato sauce. All you would need is some rice to make this into a meal, so I thought they were a good choice.

1:40 P.M. I see a neighbour. We have a chat. She doesn't ask what I'm doing.

1:45 P.M. It appears no one has noticed the cans of beans yet. It's cold and rainy today; people are looking straight ahead, eyes averted down perhaps.

1:55 P.M. The first person to notice the installation is a woman pushing a walker with wheels. She has a clear plastic bag over her head as rain protection. She does not take a close look.

2:05 P.M. Hands are cold. Temperature today is about 5 degrees Celsius. No action so far. It feels like this is going to be a slow day. I leave and go to the library to pick up a book I have on hold—"Artificial Hells" by Claire Bishop. Bishop is an art historian and critic. I go for a latte at Moja Coffee and look over the book. Bishop talks about a type of art called social practice, also referred to as interventionist art, participa-

tory art, etc. I am trying to figure what to call what I do. Are people my "central artistic medium and material?" It doesn't sound too far off.

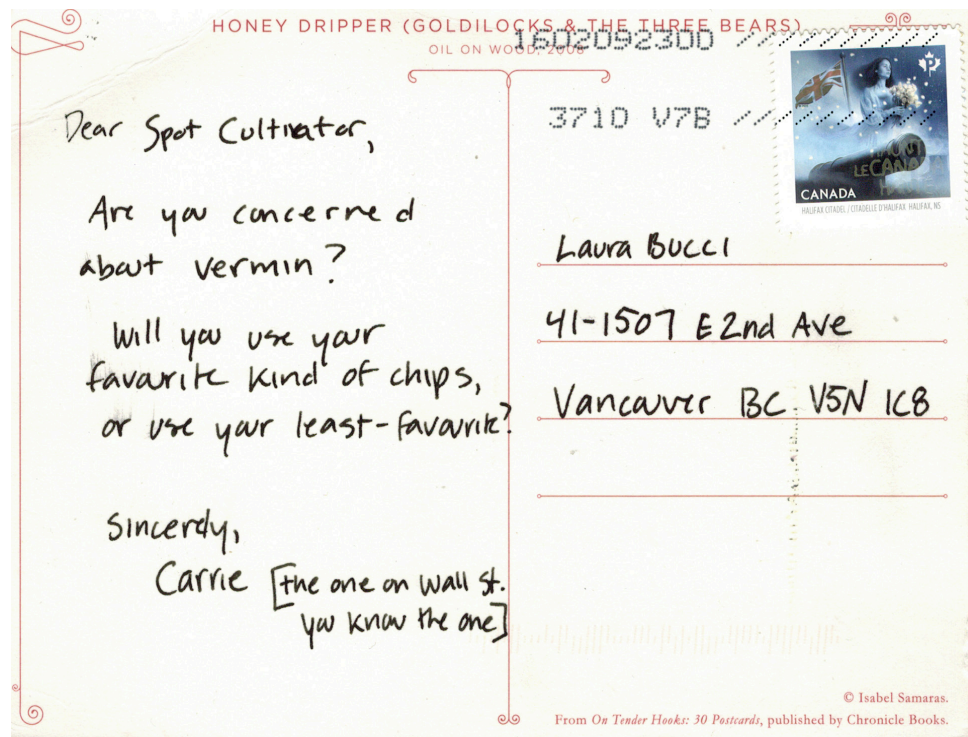
2:50 P.M. I walk by the phone booth. One can gone! Yep, slow day.

8:30 P.M. Carrie, Lenny and I go for a walk and check on the installation. Everything is gone! Beans, basket and hooks too! I knew that was always a possibility but if I continue with this I have to figure out how to secure the basket.

Post-Action: These three actions constituted a small experiment but it has raised a few questions for me. What types of food are people more comfortable taking and why? To come to a theory, I decide I need to expand the experiment by introducing more types of food—fruits, vegetables, and packaged foods. Also, would people become more comfortable taking food once they notice that it is a regular thing? If I left the basket in place inviting neighbours to leave food, could I start 'a thing'? Anyway, I am continuing this project into a publication. So this is the last postcard you are receiving in this series. I hope you have enjoyed receiving them. Send snail mail back!

"In the materialistic philosophical tradition ushered in by Epicurus and Lucretius, atoms fall in parallel formations into the void, following a slightly diagonal course. If one of these atoms swerves off course, it "causes an encounter with the next atom and from encounter to encounter a pile-up, and the birth of the world"...This is how forms come into being, from the "deviation" and random encounter between two hitherto parallel elements."

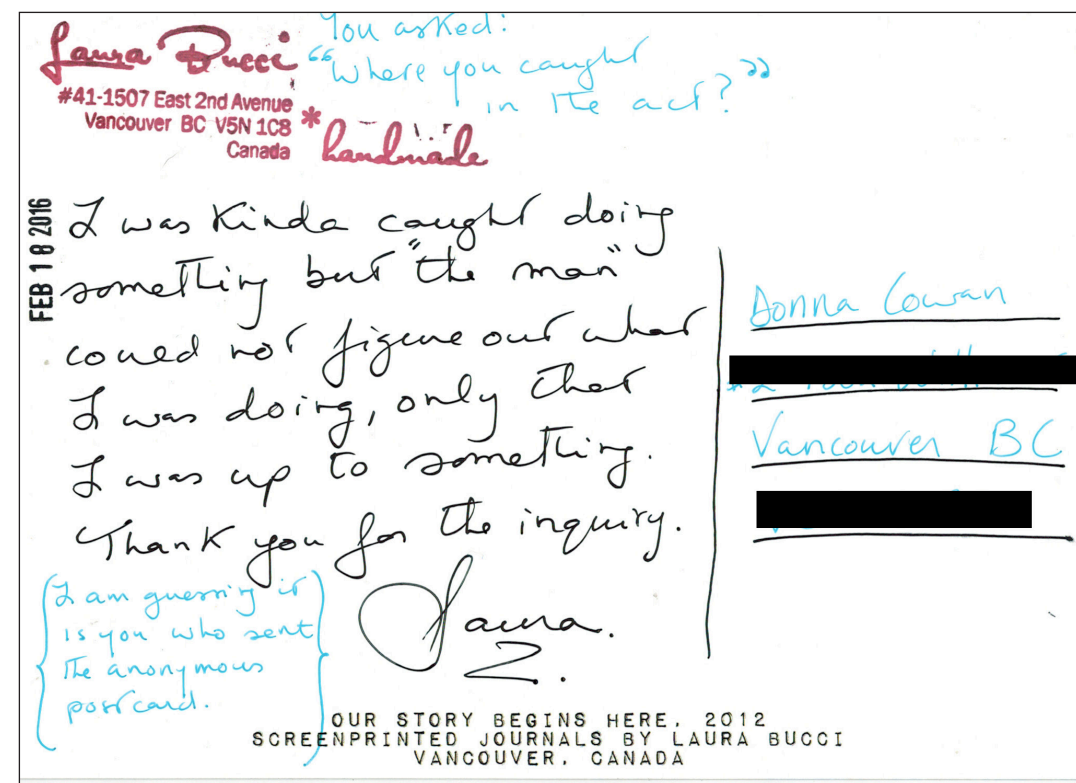
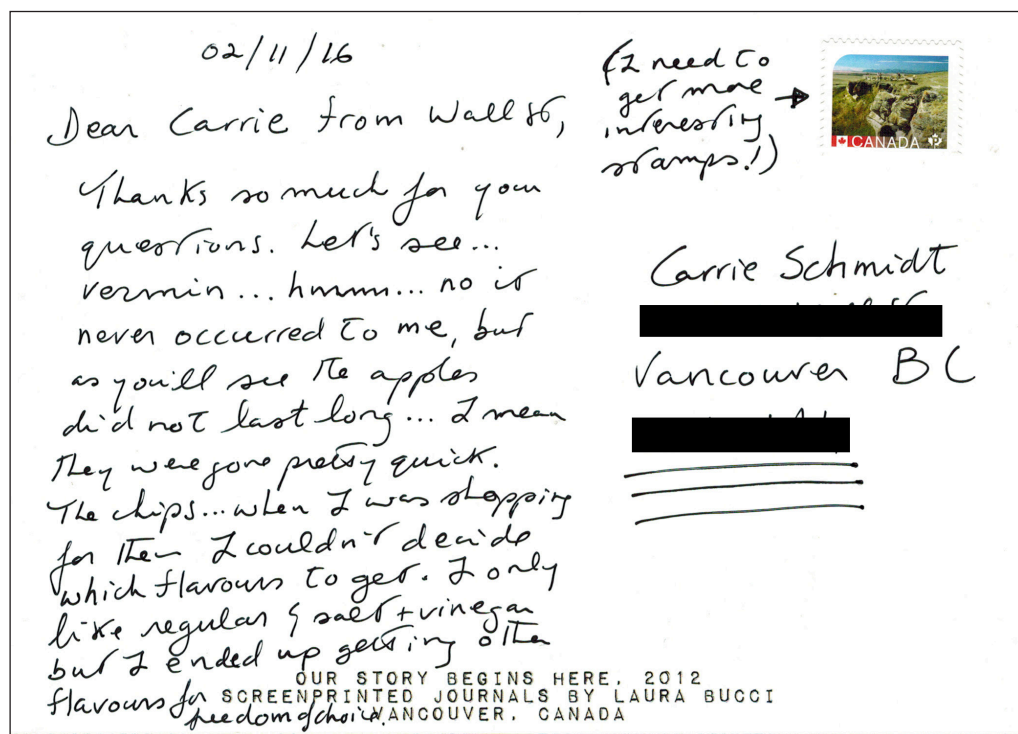
Nicolas Bourriaud



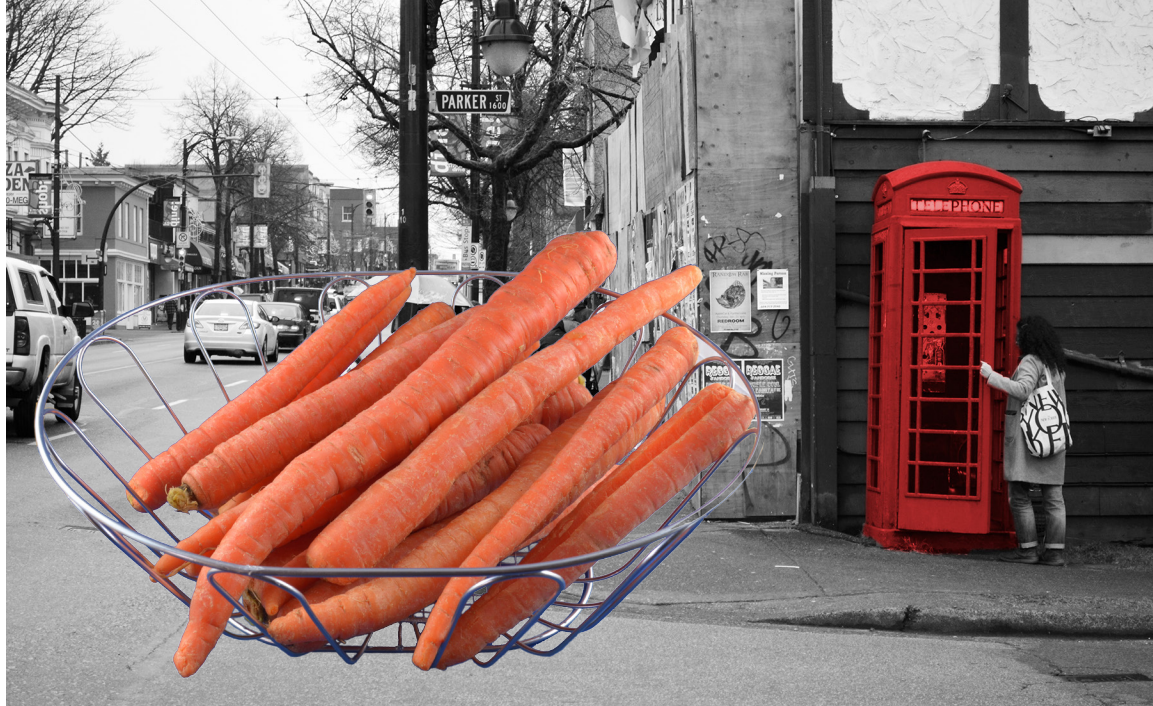
Above postcard re-printed here with permission, © Carrie Schmidt 2016



Above postcard re-printed here with permission, © Donna Cowan 2016



#4



I left a note with the carrots, it said: Free carrots. Enjoy. (Please leave basket here. Thanx)

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2016

12:35 P.M. Today I am offering carrots. It looks like I will have to share the space with another artist. There is a drawing of a telephone taped over where the phone used to be. Because of this, I can barely access two of the holes that I need to hang the wire basket. At home, I had pre-arranged the carrots in the basket with a plastic bag at the bottom so they wouldn't fall through the wire. This makes installation quick, but I realize I really don't have to worry. People just walk by and look over but have never stopped me while I'm installing...so far.

12: 40 P.M. I decide to change my observation post since there's a few parked trucks and vans in the way. There used to be an antiques furniture store next to the phone booth, 'The Peg,' but that's gone now. The space has been renovated and is ultra-modern—the total opposite of what The Peg looked like. It's too bad they haven't retained the Tudor character of the building...so Vancouver. I cross the street to the other side of Commercial Drive. I'm a bit conspicuous so I am using my phone a lot to take notes and to just make it look like I've stopped to answer a text or check email—a normal thing these days to just stand in the middle of the sidewalk oblivious to your surroundings.

12:55 P.M. Getting bolder, leaning against the

wall of Kali (a store) and making it look again like I'm engaged with the phone. I so wish someone would take some carrots!

1:19 P.M. I decide to leave. Not much happening.

Total number of people engaged during the first 45 minutes:

- People who noticed but did not stop: 4
- People who took a close look: 10
- People that took photos: 2
- People who took something: 0

7:00 P.M. I drive to the booth for a quick check. Carrots are half gone! Sweet.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2016

9:00 A.M. I go for a walk with Carrie and check on the telephone booth. I cross my fingers and hope the basket is still there. It is! Only about a quarter of the carrots are left. Nine small carrots left. They are already a bit soft. I decide that it's not a good idea to leave fresh food out for long especially since the temperature is warm. I collect everything.



“microscopic attempts of the community and neighbourhood committee type... play an absolutely crucial role”

Felix Guattari quoted in Bourriaud



I left a note with the bars, it said: Free granola and cereal bars. Enjoy! Please leave basket here for my next food offering.

MONDAY FEBRUARY 29, 2016

12:47 P.M. I deposit six apple cereal bars and four peanut chocolate granola bars.

1:04 P.M. An older man pushing a grocery cart stops to take a close look but I am surprised he doesn't take anything; he looks to his right perhaps wondering if anyone is watching. Maybe he senses me. (Lenny thinks the bars will be popular but I feel that nothing compares to apples. What is it about the apple? It's wholesome, simple, innocent, inviting?)

1:15 P.M. Two men arrive with ladders. They are doing some work on the gutters of the community centre. They've taken over my observation spot! I need to move somewhere else. I decide to go across the street to Commercial Drive next to Bosa Foods, that way I can also have a better look at a woman with a turquoise hoody standing in front the booth. She takes a bar, looks at it closely. As I walk by, I realize she has a small kid who is inside. She gives him the bar and takes a picture of the scene. I feel the woman is unusually trusting. She does not sense any malice in the offering.

1:20 P.M. An older woman with a walker slowly approaches; she stops. Opens the door and steps inside, takes a bar...I think she notices

there is a choice...takes one or two?

Although I brought a magazine, the most natural thing to do if you're standing around is to look at your phone. This is normal behavior these days.

I remember getting my first cell phone...1998, I think. Before then, people walking and talking loudly, to seemingly no one, looked like weirdoes. Even after you realized they were 'on the phone,' they still seemed weird...but also rude...how could they be so comfortable conducting a private conversation in the public space? That was the beginning of a notion of the private becoming public. The telephone booth still allowed us to keep the activity somewhat private. I still think cell phones are weird—the behavior around them is particularly annoying. It always seems to me that people are flaunting their conversations. Look, someone wants to talk to me! I am wanted!

1:32 P.M. A guy notices the install, puts his arm through the frame and takes one...two...three bars! Thin, middle-aged, black t-shirt, and jeans, not very clean-looking. Leave some for others (I think)!

1:39 P.M. I walk by for a visual count, 3 left! So that means that the woman with the child and

the older woman also took more than one! Do people have less of a sense of community if they take more than one bar? Are they less altruistic? But there are no rules. When you have no rules, you have to be OK with whatever happens and not judge.

1:45 P.M. I walk back to my usual observation spot. The tradesman with the huge black truck wonders what I'm up to, he saw me earlier. He is unloading materials and keeps looking over to me. He knows I'm up to something, he definitely seems puzzled.

9:00 P.M. Lenny walks by the booth with Carrie. He reports that all the bars are gone. He does not take the basket for me.

Total number of people engaged during the first one hour:

- People who noticed but did not stop: 6
- People who took a close look: 3
- People that took photos: 3
- People who took something: 3+

#6



I left a note with the peppers, it said: Free peppers. Saute with rosemary and eat with rice. Enjoy! Please leave basket here for my next offering.

SATURDAY MARCH 5, 2016

10:05 A.M. I am installing peppers: one green, three red, two orange, two yellow. As I pull out my camera to take photos. A guy walking by sees me, he says, "Oh wow, amazing! No phone today?" I smile. I say "What?" "No, no phone today." ???

The small flyer that was on the drawing is gone. Did the artist of the telephone drawing take it down? Or maybe someone who was interested in what it promoted.

10:25 A.M. I decide to scope Bosa Foods across the street to see if it's a good observation spot. It is! There's a bar-height counter along the windows. I order a latte. So comfortable. Good view!

10:32 A.M. Observing, while hearing conversation snippets behind me. An older, small man is inviting customers to sample lasagna. He greets customers: "Buongiorno...Ciao...Buona giornata...good morning the sun is out today, I hope it stay."

10:40 A.M. A guy walking by leans in for a close look. He goes to grab a pepper. No! He takes the whole basket!! My jaw drops. A few sec-

onds pass by...I must follow him. Quickly I grab my coffee and walk out the store. Is he intending to throw the whole thing in the garbage? He seems to be very determined. Hmmm, he goes up to the door of a store a few steps away. Unlocks the door. Goes in. I go in, maybe 30 seconds later. The store is half dark. I don't see him I call out 'are you open?' He says 'yes' and that he's just opening up, 'the process is slow' he says. I browse and walk to the back of the store because that's where I saw him when I stepped in. I don't see the basket of peppers anywhere. He seems friendly enough. He says everything in the store is from 18 different countries and everything is handmade. He asks me if I am shopping for a gift for someone. I say I'm not, and add that I've always walked by here but have never come in. It's true. I can't focus on the wares he's selling. I'm scanning for a colourful basket of peppers, but everything here is colourful. I say I will return when I finish my drink. Not true. I leave after 5 minutes.

I wonder if he will return the basket. Perhaps if he wants more food he will. After all, the note with the basket informs him that I will drop off more food. I wonder if it was also him who took the basket last time.

I am shocked really. Disappointed too. Why did he take the whole basket? If he owns a business, he is not in dire need...unless business is really bad. I conclude that he is definitely not community-minded. But what an interesting thing to have seen! So unexpected. What an interesting addition to the variety of reactions I've witnessed so far.

Total number of people engaged during the first 35 minutes:

- People who noticed but did not stop: 2
- People who took a close look: 3
- People that took photos: 0
- People who took something: 1



I left a note with the sardines, it said: Sardines anyone?. Enjoy. (Please leave basket here. Thanx).

FRIDAY, MARCH 11 2016

2:45 P.M. I am installing six tins of sardines (in soya oil and lemon juice). The bright green packaging is quite striking and should catch people's eye.

I go to my original observation spot behind the ice rink building of the community centre. Today, it's cloudy with a few sprinkles of rain. Warm.

2:57 P.M. A man...woman (?) takes two I think.

3:05 P.M. School must be out. The area is suddenly busy with kids...going home, getting picked up, milling about.

3:10 P.M. Two kids, about 14 years old, take one or two. Have the kids noticed me? They're looking my way. They seem to be reading the package then put one back. After all, it's just sardines...not chocolate.

Seeing the kids at the booth, a woman stops too to take a look and takes one.

3:15 P.M. I walk by to see how many are left. Two, but one is on the ground (inside the booth)—I guess the kids had put one back and flung one in the basket but missed and didn't care to pick it up. I open the door, pick up the package and put it back.

3:30 P.M. It's sprinkling. A lot of people are not carrying umbrellas, so they're looking down to avoid the rain.

3:35 P.M. Not too many people walking by.

3:40 P.M. My point of view is obstructed. A truck has just parked next to the booth. I think it's time to leave. I've been here almost an hour.

Total number of people engaged during the first 55 minutes:

People who noticed but did not stop: 2

People who took a close look: 6

People that took photos: 0

People who took something: 4 or less

After witnessing the store merchant greedily taking the whole basket of peppers, I have been feeling ambivalent about continuing these food deposits. I had originally planned on two more events after the peppers. His greediness had a strong effect on my enthusiasm for the project. I realize that the more I do this, the greater the variety of selfish behaviour I will witness. I ask myself, what the point of this is? As I try to answer the question, I nevertheless decide to continue as planned.

#8



I left a note with the oranges, it said: Free Oranges. Enjoy!

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 2016

1:40 P.M. I am taking photos of the six oranges I have just deposited. Two kids, maybe 14 years old, are walking by. One asks "Is that free oranges?" I say "Yeah!" He says, "Cool." He takes one and his friend too. I have no idea if they know I put them there.

I cross the street to observe from Bosa but they are closed. So I go to my usual spot by the community centre. It's grouse out today, not too many people walking.

2:00 P.M. It's freezing out. I decide to go for a coffee at M on Commercial Drive. I brought some reading but I forgot my glasses. The writing is miniscule. What to do? I sip my latte and scan The Georgia Straight. I can't focus. Today is the last time I do this. I wonder how to end the project.

2:30 P.M. I walk by the booth. Still four oranges there, the rain has stopped for a bit.

2:32 P.M. It's raining again. A guy with a black umbrella steps up to the booth to take a pic and also takes an orange. A minute after I take a walk by and notice only two oranges are left, so he took two.

2:40 P.M. Too cold and hardly any foot traffic. I call it quits for the day.

Total number of people engaged during the first 30 minutes:

- People who noticed but did not stop: 3
- People who took a close look: 2
- People that took photos: 1
- People who took something: 3

Conclusion

SOCIAL EXPERIMENT RESULTS		Recorded behaviours ~ the number of people who:				
Date (2016)	Food Item	Noticed	Stopped	Took Photos	Took Something	Daily Totals
January 15	apples	0+	6+	2	5+	13
January 23	chips	1+	20+	3	2+	26*
January 30	beans	?	1+	?	2+?	3
February 26	carrots	4+	10+	2	?	16
February 29	granola bars	6+	3+	3	3+	15
March 5	peppers	2+	3+	0	1+	6
March 11	sardines	2+	6+	0	4+	12
March 13	oranges	3+	2+	1	3+	9
	Category Total	18	51	11	20	
	Total number of passersby engaged:					100+

WEATHER RECORD		
	Mean Temperature (Celsius)	Precipitation Accumulation (mm)
January 15	4.3	0
January 23	7	0
January 30	5.5	3.1
February 26	8.9	0.4
February 29	8.3	1.9
March 5	10.8	3.9
March 11	8.9	4.8
March 13	6.6	24.6

*Most popular food item, in terms of engagement: potato chips.

Constants	Variables
the city (Vancouver)	food
phonebooth	food category (fruit, vegetables, packaged food)
wire basket	time of day
hooks	day of the week
notes left with basket	month
	content of the note
	number of items in basket
	observation spots
	interior of the booth
	weather
	foot traffic
	length of donation each day

Appendix

A collection of interventions, events, and obsessions by artists, urban planners, architects and everyday citizens utilizing the telephone booth.

Adventures with the Mojave Phone Booth

Website posts and book by Deuce of Clubs, 1997-2016

"Adventures with the Mojave Phone Booth is a book that tells the tale of what can happen when one accidentally makes famous an isolated telephone booth sitting in the middle of the Mojave Desert—which I did, beginning in 1997." Via <http://www.deuceofclubs.com/moj/mojave.htm>

Reprogramming the City: Opportunities for Urban Infrastructure

Exhibition curated by Scott Burnham, Chicago, USA, 2013

"A1 charging stations – By using the existing infrastructure, Telekom Austria Group converted telephone booths into charging stations for recharging e-vehicles, e-scooters and e-bikes. Anyone "tanking up" the electricity could pay for it like a parking ticket – via mobile phone. Vienna's first electric charging station was launched in May 2010 and within the course of the year 30 telephone booths will be turned into charging stations for e-vehicles." Description by Gillian Glover. Via <http://spacing.ca>

Call Parade

Public art project sponsored by the Brazilian telecommunications company Vivo, São Paulo, Brazil, 2012
100 artists were given free reign to redesign vandalized or out of service phone booths. Via <http://geyserofawesome.com/>

Tel-Talk

Art interventions in telephone booths and a publication about locating the public telephone booth, Toronto, Canada, curated by Paola Poletto, 2011-2012

Tel-talk brought together artists of varying backgrounds to each perform and/or animate a booth. Artists and writers were asked to consider the relationships between form and function, medium and message, telling and talking... and texting... and more. Contributors were invited to contribute a site-specific installation or short fiction that referenced a unique telephone booth location. Their work also included a phone call somewhere, somehow. Once they completed their "stories", the booth was tagged and documented. Via <http://tel-talk.blogspot.ca/>

Phone Booth Book Share

New York City, USA, 2011

"The Department of Urban Betterment's (DUB) Phone Booth Book Share is part of a series of urban interventions that explore obsolete street technology. It might look like a simple repurposing of phone booths into community book shares... hints at a grander objective." DUB is architect John Locke. Via <http://www.spontaneousinterventions.org>

Aquarium Phone booth

By artist Benedetto Bufalino & lighting designer Benoit Deseille, Lyon, France, 2011

A telephone booth was transformed into an aquarium, as part of the city's annual Festival of Light. Via <https://www.good.is>

Vandalized Phone Booth

Banksy, Soho, London, 2006

"...a crumpled and misshapen telephone booth was anonymously dumped in a side street in London's Westminster district. Bent at an awkward angle with a pickaxe protruding on one side, the phone booth appeared to have been the victim of an attack, and was bleeding red paint onto the pavement." Text by Elisha Masemann. <http://drainmag.com/>

Rewild NYC

Jeffrey Thelin, New York City, USA, Year Unknown

As an intervention, Thelin replaced the phone on a used phone booth with headphones. A 27-minute audio track mashed together many different views and thoughts on wolves. <http://www.jeffreythelin.com/>

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: June 1, 1995

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Agreement between the City of Vancouver and B.C. Telephone Company for Pay Telephones on City-Owned Streets and Property.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the City enter into an agreement with the British Columbia Telephone Company for the use of City owned property for pay phones, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Engineer and the Director of Legal Services and that the Director of Legal Services be authorized to execute such an agreement on behalf of the City.

COUNCIL POLICY

Renewal of existing agreements with utility companies requires Council approval.

PURPOSE

This report seeks Councils approval of the updated agreement between B.C. Telephone Company and the City of Vancouver regarding B.C. Tel. telephone booths on City-owned streets and property.

DISCUSSION

An agreement regarding B.C. Telephone booths located on City property has been in effect since 1962. The last agreement dated January 1, 1984 expired on January 1, 1994. The attached agreement is essentially the same as the 1994 agreement with a few exceptions.

"Charge A Call" which utilized a calling card to process calls no longer exists. That system was superseded by card reader phones which are not placed on City streets and property. Paragraph "3" of the agreement regarding verification of gross revenues by provision of an audit certificate has been added. Schedule "A" has been updated to reflect the current list of pay phones on City property.

As in the previous 1984 agreement, the 1994 agreement provides that the City receives 10% of the gross revenue collected from each telephone listed in Schedule "A". Staff comment that this is a fair return for this use of City property and that the 1994 revenues were \$31,807.27.

The term of the agreement is for 10 years, expiring on January 1, 2004, but each party may cancel with 60 days notice. All telephones are located or removed at the discretion of the City Engineer. B.C. Tel indemnifies the City of all responsibility from claims, costs, and damages associated with the placement or removal of the pay phones.

CONCLUSION

The agreement assures protection of City interests and allows B.C Telephone Company to provide additional service to its customers. It is therefore recommended that the City continue its agreement with B.C. Telephone with respect to pay phones located on City property.

A short history of the **red** telephone booth on Parker Street at Commercial Drive, Vancouver.

This red telephone booth dates back to the 1930s. It was brought over from the United Kingdom by Bruce Shaw's father who owned "The Peg." The Peg was an antiques store established in 1990 at 1003 Commercial Drive at Parker Street, in Vancouver. The name derives from Winnipeg, which is where Bruce's father was from.

The telephone booth is made of a solid metal frame. It was so heavy, that a crane was used for its delivery. Shortly after Bruce's father imported this telephone booth, the British government banned exports of this iconic artifact.

The telephone booth was never for sale and was a functioning telephone booth until the disappearance of public telephones sometime in the 2000s.

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