

Theatrical Techniques of Political Expression

‘Guerrilla theater’ is the dramatic – and sometimes controversial – expression of the political. Such theatrics is of great activist value if planned and implemented with care since it generates curiosity quickly and can illustrate a situation or make a political point with great effectiveness. Like in all activist events, students must prepare a guerrilla piece carefully to make sure that the desired outcome will be achieved. Events are almost always accompanied by traditional activities such as flyering or chanting slogans (at a rally for instance). The following is a short list of ideas to draw from when considering a guerrilla theater event.

Guerrilla Event	Desired Outcome
Chalked Outlines. Chalking the outline of bodies on campus sidewalks. Include names, ages and nationalities of terror victims.	Illustrate that ‘victims’ of terror are neither anonymous nor should they be forgotten or ignored.
Mock Funeral for Terror Victims. Could be carried out each day someone is murdered.	Same as above.
Mock Suicide Bombing. There are a few ways to do this, ranging from very graphic to more subtle. The graphic: play a tape of explosion noises and sirens at café where your “actors” are prepared to enact a “die-in.” Subtle: enter a café announcement that you are a “suicide bomber,” and pass out postcard sized biographies of Israelis killed in a similar suicide bombings.	Illustrates the brutality of suicide attacks and their life disrupting and terrorizing effect.
Mock Palestinian Jail. A plywood or cardboard wall with a life-sized door cut out of it. Students would be able to walk right through the gateway with no hindrance, experiencing the Palestinian jail.	Illustrates fact that known murderers are routinely freed from ‘jail’ in Palestinian Authority areas.
Blindfolded, Gagged and Bound. Background: Three soldiers – one of which was a Muslim – were kidnapped by Hizbullah in October 2000. Sources say they are dead, but no one knows for sure. Event: 3 students are blindfolded, gagged and bound and stand in high-traffic area. Attached to each is a placard that reads as an identity card: name, age and religion and the facts of the case.	Illustrate how Israel’s enemies ignore international law and engage in the barbaric practice of kidnapping people while providing no information about their well-being, even to family members.
The Naked Truth. On a warm spring day, activists parade around in skimpy clothes with ‘sandwich signs’ covering the front and back of each person. The signs state messages relevant to that particular moment under the banner “The Naked Truth.”	Determined prior to event.