

Words Poorly Used #133 — Invention/Intervention

The inventor... looks upon the world and is not contented with things as they are. He wants to improve whatever he sees, he wants to benefit the world; he is haunted by an idea. The spirit of invention possesses him, seeking materialization. — Alexander Graham Bell

But there is an important difference between *invention* and *intervention*! Intervention means lack of content with the way that other people do things. No person has a claim on how things should be done or to what end. Invention, on the other hand, means seeing that a new process can be discovered where an old process is missing or fails to reduce unease.

Intervention is taking that which belongs to someone else. Invention is sharing a new idea for the good of its beneficiaries. You cannot coerce people to adopt an invention, since to do so makes it an intervention.

— Kilgore Forelle