

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

By John Judy

MICHAEL

This past week the headlines have been dominated by the battle between fundamentalist religion and the ideal of Free Expression. We take you now to the heart of the conflict, this living room in Tehran.

(Lights up on a living room where three men (AMIR, FARZAD, and MASOUD) and two women (SAMEEN and ROXANA) are playing Pictionary. AMIR stands at the easel furiously drawing a grove of trees with a foolish man in the middle.)

FARZAD

Okay, it's trees! "Tree-house!"

ROXANA

No! "Woods"

SAMEEN

"Tiger Woods!"

FARZAD

What do you mean? There is no tiger! It's a guy!

MASOUD

Yeah, dumb-looking guy!

ROXANA

"Dumb-Guy Lost in the Woods"

SAMEEN

"Forrest Gump!"

AMIR

Yes!!!!

FARZAD

What was that? There is no movie called "Dumb Guy Lost in the Woods!"

ROXANA

Oh, but "Tree-House" was academy award winner!

MASOUD

Hey, you two, it's just a game...

FARZAD

That's right and now I will teach you all how this game is played!

(FARZAD steps to the easel and draws a card. Beat.)

FARZAD

Okay, I don't know if I can do this one.

ALL

Oooohhhh, listen to Farzad, he's going to teach us, etc...

AMIR

Farzad, dude, don't worry. The point of the game is to have fun.

MASOUD

Yeah, don't think my friend, just draw the first thing comes into your mind.

SAMEEN

You know I can't even draw and I love this game!

ROXANA

Honey, if you can't do it sit down and I will go.

FARZAD

I can do it!!! Okay...

(FARZAD begins to draw a mountain, followed by a stick figure with arrows going from the mountain to the figure.)

AMIR

Okay... ah... "Hills!"

MASOUD

"Hill Street Blues!"

SAMEEN

"The Hills Are Alive with the Sound of Music!"

ROXANA

No, they're big! They're mountains!

AMIR
"Twin Peaks!"

SAMEEN
"Rocky Mountain High!"

MASOUD
No wait there's a guy there...

AMIR
"Brokeback Mountain!"

SAMEEN
Oh, enough with the Brokeback!

ROXANA
The mountain is moving...

MASOUD
Toward the guy... going...

AMIR
"The Mountain Will Go to... oh my god...!"

SAMEEN and ROXANA
"Mohammed!"

FARZAD
YES!!!!

ROXANA
"The Mountain Will Go to Mohammed!"

(Sudden silence as everyone looks at the stick figure.)

FARZAD
Yes... Nice going, honey... You got it... Okay, who's next?

AMIR
Dude...

MASOUD
This is not cool...

AMIR
You drew the Blessed Prophet...

SAMEEN

Okay, everybody take a breath...

AMIR

In my house you did this!

MASOUD

Amir, your curtains are open!

AMIR

Sameen, close the curtains!!!

FARZAD

Hey, I said we should watch a movie!

ROXANA

What is wrong with you guys?! It's just a picture!

AMIR

Oh, this is helpful! Do you know that under Islamic law we have to stone our friend for blasphemy?!

FARZAD

Hey, fuck you guys!

AMIR

Oh, you want me to get the stones right now? Because I have the stones, Farzad!

SAMEEN

Okay, who wants to play Scrabble?

ROXANA

I do!

AMIR

Sameen, we can not pretend this didn't happen!

SAMEEN

Amir, of course we can! We are Shi'a. We're practically Unitarians. Come play Scrabble.

ROXANA

Everyone just let it go.

AMIR

How can you let this go, Roxana? This is expressly forbidden by the Holy Qu'ran on pain of death!

SAMEEN

No, Amir, "idolatry" is forbidden by the Qu'ran. Worshipping a figure or image is forbidden. That's the origin of the taboo. There have been many renderings of The Prophet since the beginning of the Ottoman Empire. As long as you don't worship the image it isn't idolatry.

MASOUD

Dude, you just got schooled.

AMIR

Shut up.

ROXANA

Hey, who wants to worship Farzad's stupid drawing?

FARZAD

Shut up.

ROXANA

You shut up. I am playing Scrabble.

FARZAD

Well, I am watching my "Revenge of the Sith" bootleg.

MASOUD

Dude, you got Episode Three?!

AMIR

Go on! George Lucas is totally God!

(BLACKOUT)