



2002

### A Game

Rebecca K. Connerley

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Noble, Dennis E. *A Game*. I. E. Clark, 1972. ISBN 0886800625. \$10.00. 20 pp.

Reviewer: Connerley, Rebecca K.

Reading Level: Intermediate; Young adult;

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Plays; Contemporary Realistic Plays;

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Psychology--Juvenile drama;

Theme: The evil of greed and self-interest

Production Requirements: All that this play requires is a doorway, a chair, and taped off squares on the floor.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 30-40 min.

Characters: 4

Cast: 4 adult or young adult males

Time Period: Contemporary

*A Game* begins comically with three men entering a room. They banter over what their names are but are quickly sorted out as they receive nametags. They have an innocence about them. There is a scientist, Henning, who explains that he is conducting an experiment and that is why they are there. He tells them to each stand in a square and they are given a piece of paper that says, "This is my land. It is beautiful, and it is mine." They are instructed to recite this together whenever the lights come on. They begin innocently enough but as the play continues we see the greed of human nature come to life as they argue over territories and especially a chair that is located in one man's "land". In the end of the play, the three are fighting violently over the chair and over the boundary lines when Henning returns. He tells them that the game is over but they are so engrossed in their own greed that they can't understand what he is telling them. They only thing that they can comprehend is that wherever he is standing, he is invading someone's land. The play ends abruptly as they beat Henning with the chair.

This short play is extremely intriguing. It begins quite comically, a genuine slapstick farce and then as the play continues, the action becomes more and more intense until it finally explodes in a terrible tragedy. The play would be extremely easy to produce due to the lack of set and scene changes. There are no elaborate costumes or props. The only lighting effect utilized is the lights turning on and off, which only lasts for the first few minutes of the piece. This play explores the intricacies of human nature and our innate need to own, to have something uniquely ours that no one else can have. It demonstrates our greed. The play analyzes humanity as a whole, in that every human being has fought for something that is "mine". It is seen in children and in defending what we think is ours. We don't stop to realize that those material things are "just a game" and will not last. The language of this play is ingenious and natural. The audience is not given any background information on the characters but they are developed well enough to create an emotional connection. This would be a wonderful competition piece or educational theater project.