

Q&A: What do you think of Everyone draw Muhammad day?

Anonymous asks: *What do you think of Everyone draw Muhammad day?*

I hadn't heard of it, and you made me go look it up. I suspect my thoughts are not particularly novel and are necessarily initial.

Mixed feelings.

I sympathise with the free speech sentiment. I am, of course, appalled that someone's cartoon should lead them to be afraid for their life. It leads me to give a consideration to those who are suffering persecution at the hands of militant islamic groups in a way that appears to be much more prevalent and immediate (if you can grade these things) than what a western cartoonist may face.

On the other hand: It is needlessly offensive to those within Islam who would also be appalled at the militant response. And for what gain? It amplifies the disrespect.

Perhaps above all, it is poor satire. A good cartoonist uncovers truth from the side, like the jester of old. It is a form of wisdom that confronts and challenges even as it amuses. As soon as it is self-referential it loses all that and is much more likely to be self-serving and purile.