

RULES FOR BLASPHEMY CONTEST

The Center for Inquiry (CFI), in conjunction with its Campaign for Free Expression, is pleased to announce a contest that will challenge your blaspheming skills. You are invited to submit a phrase, poem, or statement that would be, or would have been, considered blasphemous (loose definition: denying or scoffing at God or God's alleged attributes). One of the reasons we are running this contest is to emphasize our view that there should be no restrictions on speech criticizing religion. For much of human history, religious institutions have successfully used force or the threat of force to suppress criticism. People have been subject to severe punishment (e.g., tongues being cut out, branding, or death) merely for questioning religious dogma.

Our primary purpose is *not* to offend religious sensibilities; but, of course, since some religious maintain that any criticism of religion is offensive, avoiding all offense would be difficult, if not impossible. In any event, the rules for the contest are as follows:

1. Any person over the age of 18 may submit up to two entries. Entries must be submitted by midnight (EDT) on October 1, 2009.
2. No employee, or relative by blood or marriage of an employee, of the Center for Inquiry or its affiliates is eligible to enter the contest.
3. All submissions become property of CFI to use, reproduce, or distribute as it sees fit in its sole discretion, although authorship will be acknowledged. CFI, in its discretion may forego any intellectual property rights for those entries that are not judged to be among the five best entries, as specified below.
4. By submitting an entry, the contestant warrants that the work is original. (No plagiarizing from Satan or his minions.) The contestant also warrants that the submission does not violate the intellectual property rights of any person or entity. In addition, by submitting an entry, the contestant grants permission to CFI to use his or her name for publicity purposes, including, but not limited to, announcing the results of the contest.
5. Submissions may take any form, including limericks and haikus. However, there will be a limit of twenty words, which will be strictly enforced. English is the official language of the contest and only entries in English will be reviewed. Please note: do not submit cartoons. There is a separate cartoon contest.
6. Entries should be emailed to **blasphemycontest@centerforinquiry.net**. Place "CFI Blasphemy Contest" in the subject line.
7. A panel of judges will determine the top five entries (unless God strikes them dead first). In reaching their decision, the judges will favor submissions that are creative, insightful, cogent, and memorable.
8. CFI does not believe in censorship, so you can say anything you want in your entry. However, you should be aware that crude entries are unlikely to win. Sexual jokes tend to exhibit little imagination. Entries should be more like: "God is the Santa Claus You Never Stopped Believing In" or "Be Christian: Get Three Gods for the Price of One" instead of some joke about priests and altar boys or Mary and the dove.
9. The decisions of the judges will be final and unreviewable. The top five winners will receive a CFI t-shirt with their submission imprinted on the t-shirt. The overall first place winner will also receive a coffee mug with her/his submission on the mug. In addition, the overall winner will be recognized in a forthcoming issue of *Free Inquiry* as well as on CFI's web site, and will receive whatever publicity we can reasonably obtain. Plus, of course, eternal damnation.
10. This contest is void where prohibited by law—but if the law in question prohibits blasphemy, let us know.