

CALL FOR PAPERS

Metaphysical Society of America
61st Annual Meeting
Boston University
March 5-6, 2010

Being and Negation

The general theme of the 2010 meeting is the issue of the metaphysical significance of negation where 'negation' denotes, at the very least, the denial of the existence of a state of affairs. The aim of the 2010 meeting is to explore the significance that negation in this or any other sense holds for our understanding of what is and what it means 'to be.' Among the many virtues of this theme is the fact that it can be approached from a variety of metaphysical and anti-metaphysical perspectives and traditions.

The wide net cast by the theme can be gathered from the following questions. What are the metaphysical implications, if any, of the presumption that a judgment can indicate what it is the case if and only if the negation of that judgment can be countenanced? Does the ascription of a truth value to a negated proposition hold any ontological significance? Are there so-called 'negative facts,' as Russell contends? Does the work done by negation in reasoning, from *reductio ad absurdum* proofs to crucial calculations in game theory, have metaphysical implications? Is every determination a form of negation, as Spinoza would have it, or does his use of negation not go far enough, as Hegel argues? Is being necessarily related to non-being, as the Eleatic Stranger appears to contend (*Sophist*, 256-259) and, if so, does this relation point to something more basic than being in order to account for that difference and relation? Are negation and its metaphysical significance best understood in terms of supposedly more basic themes such as consciousness and imagination, potentiality, privation, and actuality, perfection, or even nothingness? What is the relation of negation to contradiction, contrariety, difference, or even *différance*?

Pursuing such questions – and the foregoing are only a sampling – brings us up against certain basic commitments or decisions regarding the logic and language of metaphysics. Papers that directly engage these and related questions are welcome.

500-word abstracts should be submitted by June 1, 2009 to:

Daniel Dahlstrom/ Department of Philosophy
Boston University
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

Those whose abstracts are chosen by the Program Committee must submit completed papers no later than December 1, 2009 to allow time for review by commentators and publication of the program.

ARISTOTLE PRIZE: Papers submitted by persons who have not yet earned a Ph.D. or whose Ph.D. is less than five years old at the time of submission will be considered for the Aristotle Prize if the Program Committee is alerted to eligibility. The prize carries a cash award of \$500 and inclusion in the program. Please encourage graduate students and junior colleagues to consider entering the competition. Papers submitted for the Aristotle Prize must be complete by the deadline for submission: June 1, 2009.