

PHILOSOPHY 4360/5360 - METAPHYSICS

Some Metaphysical Questions

The following are among the bewildering variety of questions that raise metaphysical issues:

- (1) Is there anything that must be true of absolutely everything that exists?
- (2) Must anything that exists have intrinsic properties?
- (3) What are properties? Are they universals, or tropes, or . . . ?
- (4) Must anything that exists stand in some relation to something else?
- (5) Must anything that exists be completely determinate, or can there be vague objects?
- (6) Can there be things that exist that are not in time?
- (7) Is there anything that is not part of the spatiotemporal world?
- (8) What are the truthmakers for mathematical statements?
- (9) What are numbers?
- (10) Can there be necessarily existent entities?
- (11) What is it for something to be an actual entity?
- (12) Is everything that exists an actual entity?
- (13) What are the truthmakers for statements of logical possibility?
- (14) Do merely possible worlds exist?
- (15) What sorts of things are possible worlds?
- (16) Is change really possible?
- (17) Can there be things that are in principle unobservable?
- (18) Can one make sense of a non-reductionist view of theoretical entities?
- (19) Can there be aspects of reality that are in principle unknowable?
- (20) Why is there something, rather than nothing?
- (21) Could the world contain only dispositional properties?
- (22) Can there be pure dispositional properties – that is, properties that have no categorical basis?
- (23) What is time?
- (24) Is time real, or an illusion?
- (25) Could time be cyclic?
- (26) Can there be time without change?
- (27) Is space real, or an illusion?

- (28) Is space itself an entity, or is it reducible to spatial relations between objects and events?
- (29) What are laws of nature?
- (30) Do laws of nature govern the occurrence of events in time?
- (31) Are there laws of nature?
- (32) What is causation?
- (33) Is causation real, or an illusion?
- (34) Could a cause succeed its effect?
- (35) Could a cause and its effect be simultaneous?
- (36) Are causal facts supervenient upon non-causal facts?
- (37) Do causal relations between events presuppose causal laws?
- (38) Is the world a deterministic one?
- (39) What are persisting substances? Are they bundles of properties, or properties plus a substratum, or . . . ?
- (40) What constitutes "identity over time"?
- (41) Do objects perdure, or endure?
- (42) Does the physical universe depend upon the existence of an immaterial creator?
- (43) Is there a necessarily existent being upon which the contingent world depends for its existence?
- (44) Could there be a person who was not in time?
- (45) Can persons be analyzed in terms of person-stages?
- (46) Is the self a bundle of experiences?
- (47) Is the self a bundle of powers?
- (48) Do humans involve immaterial souls?
- (49) Do humans involve any properties that are not reducible to the properties that characterize the inanimate world?
- (50) What is consciousness?
- (51) What is intentionality? What is it for a mental state to be 'about' something?
- (52) Could consciousness be a purely physical phenomenon?
- (53) Could intentionality be a purely physical phenomenon?
- (54) Are humans free?
- (55) Is freedom compatible with determinism?
- (56) Do humans possess libertarian free will?
- (57) Is there such a thing as agent-causation?