

INDIANA PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

FALL MEETING - OCTOBER 19, 1974

Indiana Central College, Indianapolis  
Schwitzer Center (map enclosed)

Department Chairmen: Please post this program notice. Students are cordially invited. There is no registration fee.

9:30 a.m. Coffee and Doughnuts

10:00 a.m. Symposium: "Philosophy and . . . "

John Nichols, St. Joseph's College, Chairman

"Philosophy of Law in the Undergraduate Curriculum"

Ken Kipnis, Purdue University

"Interdisciplinary Education at Ball State"

David Annis, Ball State University

"Earlham's Program for Integral Education"

Len Clark, Earlham College

11:45 a.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Business Meeting

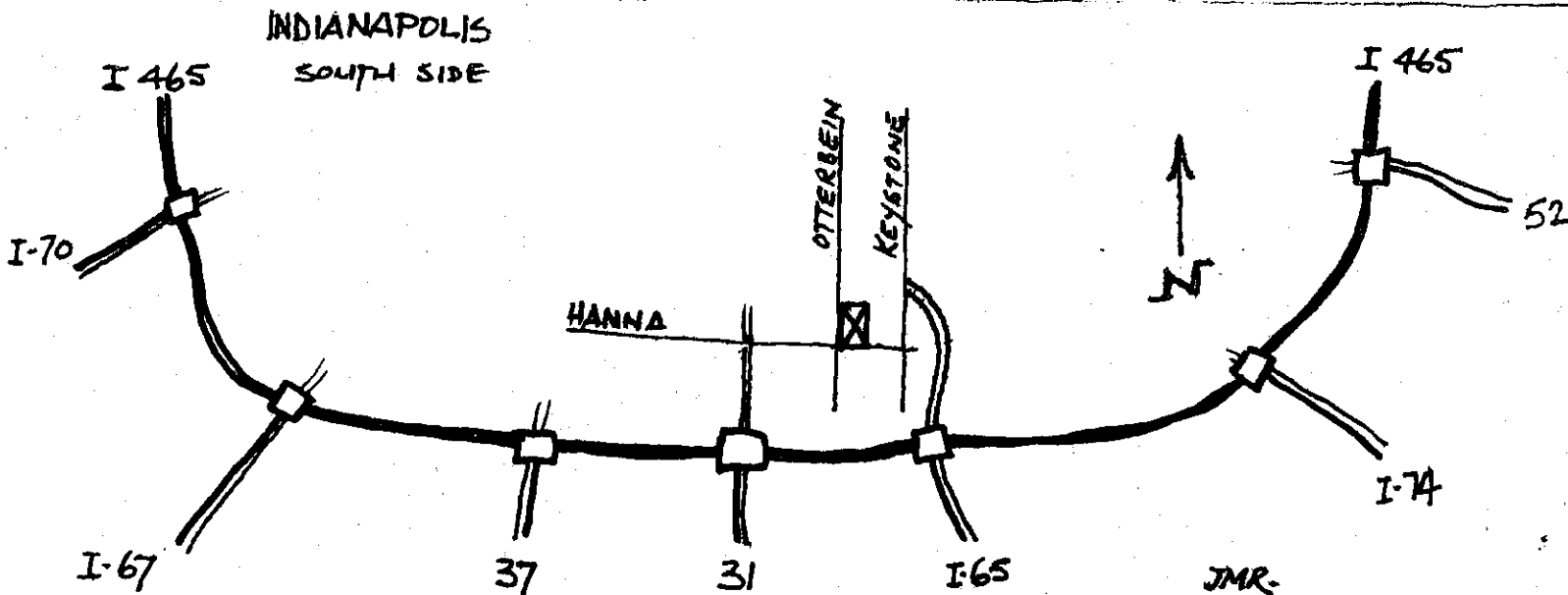
1:30 p.m. "Prescriptivism and Fairness"

James P. Sterba, University of Notre Dame

"On a Priori Disproofs of God's Existence"

Robert J. Rosenthal, Hanover College

Abstracts of the afternoon papers are attached.



## Prescriptivism and Fairness

James P. Sterba

In this paper, I argue that the contractual theory John Rawls set forth in A Theory of Justice is not, as R. M. Hare and others have claimed, practically equivalent with the prescriptivist theory Hare developed over a decade ago in Freedom and Reason. In Hare's theory, moral judgements are required to be universalizable, prescriptive and to give equal consideration to the interests of all the affected parties, and these three requirements are interpreted so as to lead to the choice of principles which maximize utility in society. Whereas in Rawls' contractual theory and even in Hare's own version of a contractual theory, I contend, there is an ideal of fairness which at least limits the pursuit of the maximization of utility in society when this requires the sacrifice of the interests of many people for the sake of fanatical ideals. In addition, I show that Rawls' theory goes on to guarantee basic rights to minorities that would also offend against the maximization of utility in society.

### "ON A PRIORI DISPROOFS OF GOD'S EXISTENCE"

Robert J. Rosenthal  
Hanover College

#### An Abstract

A priori disproofs of God's existence--i.e., arguments which contend that one or more of the necessary attributes of God are contradictory--have been comparatively neglected in recent philosophy of religion, although some can be found there. When we see the general structure of such disproofs it becomes apparent that they are potent atheological arguments. In determining which divine attributes to examine for possible inconsistency, one should pay particular attention to the most central biblical and confessional characterizations of God.

I offer a disproof which contends that the attributes of divine personality and timelessness are inconsistent, so that nothing can exist having both attributes. Virtually all theists insist on the moral personality of God: while biblical and confessional tradition is relatively silent on nontemporality, some of the greatest systematic theologians have come to that doctrine on grounds that they felt were both consistent with those traditions and required by a sound metaphysics. But there cannot be a God who is both able to have moral obligations and not subject to temporal descriptions. Thomistic attempts to evade this charge fail. In general, philosophy of religion and theology would both benefit from a renewed study of such a priori disproofs.