Ricoeur and the Negation of Happiness
‘Here we have the more than welcome sequel to Alison Scott-Baumann’s highly regarded and in many ways path-breaking study *Ricœur and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion*. This book is the product of original scholarship, much hard thinking, and a good deal of shrewdly applied practical as well as theoretical wisdom.’

**Christopher Norris**, Distinguished Research Professor in Philosophy, Cardiff University, UK

‘Alison Scott-Baumann’s *Ricœur and the Negation of Happiness* is a unique contribution to those interested in the thought of Paul Ricœur, and in the importance negation played in his philosophical project. The book situates Ricœur amongst those he engaged with throughout his career, but does so through a lens that has yet to receive the attention it deserves. The book surpasses others, however, with its use of archival work, showing the untapped resources that still exist in Ricœur’s thinking. This book will be of interest to those coming to Ricœur for the first time because of its clarity of expression and the way it navigates a variety of philosophical orientations. It will be of equal value to Ricœur specialists in that it advances the work of Ricœur on negation in ways unparalleled.’

**Greg Johnson**, Professor of Philosophy, Pacific Lutheran University, USA and Research Associate, Oxford University, UK.

Ricœur lectured and wrote for over twenty years on negation (‘Do I understand something better if I know what it is *not*, and what is *not-ness*?’) and never published his extensive writings on this subject. Working on Kant, Hegel and Sartre, Ricœur decided that all these forms of negation are incompatible and also fatally flawed because they fail to resolve false binaries of negative: positive. Alison Scott-Baumann demonstrates how Ricœur subsequently incorporated negation into his linguistic turn, using dialectics, metaphor, narrative, parable and translation in order to show how negation is in us, not outside us: language both creates and clarifies false binaries. *Ricœur and the Negation of Happiness* draws on Ricœur’s published works, previously unavailable archival material and many other sources.

Alison Scott-Baumann argues that thinking positively is necessary but not sufficient for aspiring to happiness - what is also required is affirmation of negative impulses: we know we are split by contradictions and still try to overcome them. She also demonstrates the urgency of analysing current socio-cultural debates about wellbeing, education and equality, which rest insecurely upon our loose use of the negative as a category mistake.

**Alison Scott-Baumann** is Professor of Society, Philosophy and Belief at Derby University, Visiting Research Fellow at Lancaster University, UK and Leverhulme Emeritus Research Fellow 2012-13. She is a member of the Fonds Ricœur Conseil Scientifique.