In this book, Michael Slater provides a new assessment of pragmatist views in the philosophy of religion. Focusing on the tension between naturalist and anti-naturalist versions of pragmatism, he argues that the anti-naturalist religious views of philosophers such as William James and Charles Peirce provide a powerful alternative to the naturalism and secularism of later pragmatists such as John Dewey and Richard Rorty. Slater first examines the writings of the “classical pragmatists” – James, Peirce, and Dewey – and argues for the relevance of their views for thinking about such topics as the nature of religion and the viability of natural theology. His final three chapters engage with the religious views of later pragmatists such as Rorty and Philip Kitcher and with current philosophical debates over metaphysical realism, naturalism, and evidentialism. His book will be of particular interest to philosophers of religion, theologians, and specialists in American philosophy.

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PRAGMATISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

MICHAEL R. SLATER
Georgetown University
For Erin, Patrick, and Bridget
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Works by William James, Charles S. Peirce, and John Dewey are referred to in the body of the text by abbreviations given in the Bibliography at the end of the book. A briefer version of Chapter 1 is forthcoming under the same title in International Philosophical Quarterly, and Chapter 6 is a slightly revised version of an article published under the same title in American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 87, No. 3 (Summer 2013). I am grateful to the editors and publishers of both journals for permission to reuse this material.
Abbreviations

WORKS BY JAMES

All references to James’s works are to The Works of William James, Frederick H. Burkhardt, Fredson Bowers, and Igas Skrupskelis (eds.) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975–88). The original publication date appears in square brackets. These volumes are referred to in the text and footnotes by the abbreviations listed below. Quotations are unaltered unless otherwise noted.

PBC: Psychology: The Briefer Course, [1892] 1984
WB: The Will to Believe and Other Popular Essays in Philosophy, [1897] 1979
VRE: The Varieties of Religious Experience, [1902] 1985
P: Pragmatism, [1907] 1975
SPP: Some Problems of Philosophy, [1911] 1979
ERE: Essays in Radical Empiricism, [1912] 1976
ERM: Essays in Religion and Morality, 1982

WORKS BY PEIRCE

All references to Peirce’s works are to The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings, 2 vols, Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (eds.) (Vol. 1) and the Peirce Edition Project (Vol. 2) [Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992 (Vol. 1), 1998 (Vol. 2)]. These volumes are referred to in the text and footnotes by the abbreviations listed below. Quotations are unaltered unless otherwise noted.

List of abbreviations

WORKS BY DEWEY


CF:  A Common Faith (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1934)