

While George Santayana and William James fulfill the philosopher's historically intimidating obligation to explain nothing less than reality itself, their essays betray some fundamental differences. Santayana contends that neither the senses, imagination or human reason is singularly adequate to guide human existence and posits that the latter two's interplay creates man's philosophical alternative—an inspirational though unattainable “moral ideal.” Santayana thus places a heavy burden on his fellows, who imaginatively become the authors of their own inevitable failure. James, conversely, glories in the sensory and finds life most intense “when brought down to the non-thinking level—the level of pure sensorial perception.” James embraces an unabashed love for nature and bases it on the very grounds that cause Santayana his discomfort. James favorably cites W.H. Hudson, who writes that the “self” he'd become “thinks little, reasons little, having a surer guide in his [mere sensory perceptions]. He is in perfect *harmony* with nature.”