



# **The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy and Character and Opinion in the United States (Rethinking the Western Tradition)**

*George Santayana*

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This book brings together two seminal works by George Santayana, one of the most significant philosophers of the twentieth century: *Character and Opinion in the United States*, which stands with Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* as one of the most insightful works of American cultural criticism ever written, and "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," a landmark text of both philosophical analysis and cultural criticism.

An introduction by James Seaton situates Santayana in the intellectual and cultural context of his own time. Four additional essays include John Lachs on the ways Santayana's understanding of "the soul of America" help explain the relative peace among nationalities and ethnic groups in the United States; Wilfred M. McClay on Santayana's life of the mind as it relates to dominant trends in American culture; Roger Kimball on Santayana's "most uncommon benefice, common sense"; and James Seaton on Santayana's distinction between "English liberty" and "fierce liberty." All the essays serve to highlight the relevance of Santayana's ideas to current issues in American culture, including education, immigration, and civil rights.

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