

Report on typology in american writing

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Typology in American Literature is described as the study of symbols and types which are found in literary works from past to present. There are two main groups of typology: antitype and type. The antitype is described as a person or thing that represents the opposite of someone or something else; while the type is a person or thing that has characteristics that differentiate them from another person or thing. Typology, in a biblical sense is what you are looking at as different signs and different interpretations of symbols and readings in the Bible. Throughout the colonial period, typology was subdivided into types and antitypes where settlers were faced with relations to the New and Old Testament. William Bradford, Jonathan Edwards and Thomas Payne are some authors that all use typology in their literature.

William Bradford was an English Puritan Separatist. He was the founder and longtime Governor of Plymouth colonial settlement. Bradford was one of the Puritans on the Mayflower as it went across the Atlantic. In 1630 he began to write his book *Of Plymouth Plantation*, which ended up one of the most important books in the settlement of New England. In the beginning, the pilgrims arrived in what became Plymouth, Massachusetts. The non-Separatist settlers all came over in 1621. When Bradford first got to Plymouth plantation, he says, “ Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beast and wild men? In what multitudes there might of them they knew not. Neither could they, as it were, go up to the top of Pisgah to view from this wilderness a more godly country to feed their hopes; for which was so ever they turned their eyes they could have little solace or content in respect of any outward object”.

The antitype in this quote is him comparing himself to Moses when he stood on Mt. Pisgah in the bible. The type would be that William Bradford was standing in the promised land while Moses was standing on a mountain. Jonathan Edwards was an American Revivalist preacher who did many sermons at his church and all over Massachusetts. Jonathan Edwards was labeled an extremist due to his passion and activism towards this movement, and people's sins. He played a big role in the first Big Awakening and oversaw one of the first revivals in his church. In Jonathan Edwards's Personal Narrative he had a variety of concerns about his soul from his childhood. He had two spiritual awakenings both of which were the same, and it went over how some people got eternal life, and some don't based on eternal sins, which bothered him. The antitype in this narrative would be getting to go to heaven because you repent for your sins. The type would be not getting to go to heaven because of your sins. Another example of antitype and type in Jonathan Edwards's writings is in his Doctrine when he explains that it's not the light that shows you are sinful, and it's not a revelation of depravity. The Doctrine does not teach us anything new or enlighten us in any way. He also says, "Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead...a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock". He is talking about Newton's third law in this quote, which is Law of Motion. The antitype in this would be that wickedness can keep your soul from being saved, just like a spider web could not save a fallen rock due to sheer weight. The type is that not being wicked will save you.

Thomas Paine was an English born American political activist. "The son of a Quaker father and an Anglican mother, he once said that a sermon he heard

at age eight convinced him of the cruelty inherent in Christianity and made him a rebel forever". Thomas Paine not only grew up being a " rebel", it followed him into adulthood when people started labeling him as an atheist and questioned his religious beliefs. He wrote The Age of Reason which is similar to his pamphlet Common Sense. The Age of Reason is about Thomas Paine's doubts about traditional religion. He was trying to save the world from Atheism which soon put him in charge of Atheism. Because of this book, the reputation that he built as a good Christian soon changed and Paine became feared throughout America because people thought he was an Atheist. He tries to back himself up by saying, " I believe in one God and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life". Much like in the bible it says, " For there is one God; and there is none other but he".

In this passage the antitype is Thomas Paine explaining that he was not an atheist, he only believed in one God. The type would be what the Mark wrote in the bible, stating that there is " only one God". In conclusion, these authors all portray what type and antitype are in their passages and how they correlate with the bible. As previously stated, Typology, in a biblical sense is what you are looking at as different signs and different interpretations of symbols and readings in the Bible. Throughout the colonial period, typology was subdivided into types and antitypes where settlers were faced with relations to the New and Old Testament. These passages portray the symbolism and subject matter needed in typology. William Bradford, Jonathan Edwards and Thomas Paine all share through " their" experiences with types and antitypes in their own personal works. They all share similar stories and how they correlate to the subject of typology.

All in all, there is pure symbolism and parallels between these men's work and The Bible. Concluding Typology can still be defined as a gateway to a bigger picture with underlying meanings and correlation of past and present events through literature.