The preposition is of particular interest to syntacticians, historians and sociolinguists of English, as its placement within a sentence is influenced by syntactic and sociolinguistic constraints, and by how the ‘rules’ regarding prepositions have changed over time, as a result of language change, of change in attitudes towards language and of processes such as standardization. This book investigates preposition placement in the early and late Modern English periods (1500–1900), with special focus on preposition stranding (The house which I live in) in contrast to pied piping (The house in which I live). Based on a large-scale analysis of precept and usage data, this study reassesses the alleged influence of late eighteenth-century normative works on language usage. It also sheds new light on the origins of the stigmatization of preposition stranding. This study will be of interest to scholars working on syntax and grammar, corpus linguistics, historical linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Nuria Yáñez-Bouza is a lecturer in English Language at the University of Manchester, and currently holds a Senior Research Fellowship at the University of Vigo, Spain.
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GRAMMAR, RHETORIC AND USAGE IN ENGLISH

Preposition Placement 1500–1900

NURIA YÁÑEZ-BOUZA

Universidade de Vigo, University of Manchester
This book is dedicated to the memory of the late Richard M. Hogg (1944–2007), for his genuine smile and for his vote of confidence in me as a postgraduate student and lecturer; I shall always be most profoundly grateful. His sudden loss is immensely lamented.

þá ymbe hlaéw riodan, hildedéore
æþelinga bearn, ealra twelfa
woldon cearge cwíðan, kyning maénan,
wordgyd wrecan ond ymb wer sprecan
eahtodan eorscipe ond his ellenweorc
duguðum dëmdon. Swá hit gedéfe bið
þæt mon his wînedryhten wordum herge
ferhðum fréoge
ponne hé forð scile
of líchaman laéded weordan
swá begnornodon
Géata lëde
hláfordes hryre,
heordgenéatas: wyruldcyning
cwaédon þæt hé waère
monðwæérust
manna mildest,
onðwæórnost.
léodum lídost

— Beowulf, lines 3169–82
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Abbreviations

AP  Adjective phrase
ARCHER  A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers
Defence  ‘Defence of the Epilogue to The Conquest of Granada’ (Dryden 1672)
DENG  A Dictionary of English Normative Grammar (Sundby et al. 1991)
ECCO   Eighteenth Century Collections Online
ECEG   Eighteenth-Century English Grammars database
EME   Early Middle English
EModE  Early Modern English
Essay   Of Dramatick Poesie, An Essay (Dryden 1668a, 1684)
HC    Helsinki Corpus
image  Image number in the digitised edition consulted in EEBO where there is no pagination in the original
LME   Late Middle English
LModE  Late Modern English
ME    Middle English
ModE  Early and late Modern English (1500–1900)
OED   Oxford English Dictionary
ODNB  Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
NP    Noun phrase
PP    Prepositional phrase
PDE   Present-Day English
P-piping  Preposition pied piping
P-stranding Preposition stranding
VP    Verb phrase

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