

Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	vii
<i>List of Figures</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
Introduction	1
1 Exploring Epicene Pronouns in History	9
Characteristics of the personal pronouns	13
Previous changes: trends throughout history	16
Pronoun acquisition	23
The psychological reality of epicene pronouns	26
What epicenes mean	29
Differences between generic <i>he</i> and singular <i>they</i>	36
Conclusions	42
2 Epicenes in the Twenty-First Century	45
Corpus linguistics: a problematic methodology?	46
The BE06 corpus	49
Singular <i>they</i> and generic <i>he</i> in BE06	50
Comparing <i>they</i> with <i>he</i> in BE06	59
Qualitative antecedent analysis	61
Gender-stereotyped antecedents	69
Conclusions	74
3 Epicenes and Social Movements	76
Contextualising epicene prescriptions	77
Initiating formal prescriptive practice	77
Tracing epicene history	82
The effects of sexual politics	89
Feminism and language	90
Non-sexist language and epicenes	93
Epicenes in education	98
‘Correct’ language in educational handbooks	99
Modern approaches to epicenes	102
Conclusions	110

4	Prescriptions, Standards, and Epicenes	113
	Creating The Grammar Corpus	114
	Analysing prescriptions	119
	Endorsing epicene candidates	120
	Avoiding problematic antecedents	124
	Social interference?	130
	Corpus Comparative Statistical Keywords	131
	Keywords in the corpus	134
	Conclusions	140
5	Accounting for Epicene Choice	143
	The British English epicene	144
	Epicenes and language-external forces	149
	Explaining epicene reference	154
	Notional number and other explanations	155
	Homonymy Theory	160
	Conclusions	166
	Conclusion	168
	<i>Notes</i>	174
	<i>Glossary</i>	175
	<i>References</i>	179
	<i>Index</i>	190