Adventures in the Advice Trade

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1. Overview.

For over four hundred years now, people have been advising speakers of English about their language. Things picked up considerably in the late 18th century, with Robert Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762) a particularly influential volume. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the tremendous expansion of formal education and of occupations demanding facility with the written language drove a parallel expansion of the market for advice, a need met by an avalanche of material designed to be helpful or authoritative: textbooks, hundreds of them, at every level (some, like Heller (1987-98) aimed at young children), college handbooks, newspaper and magazine columns, usage dictionaries (Garner (1998) and (2003) being the most recent comprehensive volumes), compilations of humorous errors (Richard Lederer has made something of a career in this vein), brisk checklists for beleagured businesspeople (Feierman (1995)) and other unsure writers (Cazort (1997)), radio and television spots, and much more. Generally recognized as the modern monuments of this genre in the U.S. are Fowler's (British) usage dictionary (1st ed. 1926) and the little Strunk & White book of advice for writers (1st ed. 1959).

The advice literature has several aims: to be helpful to the unpracticed or unsure, from plowboys to college students to secretaries; to correct professionals – journalists and administrators are often mentioned – who ought to know better; to "fix" the language, in the sense of enforcing uniformity of usage, if possible for all time; to protect the language from perceived threats, namely those presented by innovative features, the non-standard vernaculars, geographically restricted features, informal varieties, and the spoken language; and to advocate particular choices among alternatives, on the basis of values like grace, logic, clarity, and brevity. This enterprise is built on an enormous (and largely unarticulated) substructure of beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies about language, including a view of syntactic structure that comes to us from the ancients via the medieval grammarians and has little to do with the constructs and hypotheses of 20th-century syntactic research. Although many others have tried to expose, and critically examine, the foundational assumptions of "prescriptive grammar" (as the advice literature is often, somewhat inaccurately, referred to) and I don't propose to go over this ground again in detail, I nevertheless have to inventory a number of these assumptions, if only to make comprehensible some of the pieces of advice in the literature.

My approach to the advice literature is informed by modern research in linguistics, whose foundational assumptions diverge strikingly from those of the advice literature at almost every point. Indeed, the linguistic literature on English grammar – from the first great reference work, Jespersen (1909-49), to the recent compendious single-volume works, Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al. (1999), and Huddleston & Pullum (2002) – and usage, especially the great *Merriam-Webster Dictionary of English Usage* (1989), lives almost entirely in a different intellectual universe from the advice literature. This is so even when the linguistic literature proposes to

describe established general formal standard written English, which is the core of what the advice literature proposes to teach. When the two traditions collide – as in linguists' critiques by, for instance, Hall (1950), Bolinger (1980), Nunberg (1983), and Pinker (1994), and ripostes by, for instance, Halpern (1997), Wallace (2001), Garner (2003), and Fiske (2004) – things get ugly fast.

The traditions are especially hard to compare directly because linguists amost universally take language to reside within individuals and social groups, and only there, while the advice literature (following folk beliefs about language) takes as given what Dennis Preston has called *exteriority*, the assumption that language resides outside human beings and independent of them, analogous either to laws or to moral precepts. In addition, linguists place no special intrinsic value on standard varieties and written versions of language, while the advice literature (again in accord with folk beliefs) takes standard varieties and written versions to be ideal forms of language, from which all other varieties are deviations (see the survey in Milroy & Milroy (1999)).

In any case, from this sometimes chaotic controversy, I extract seven oppositions between the advice literature and the linguistic literature and use these in exploring topics in the advice literature. Though much of what I say here about these oppositions will be familiar to linguists, I believe that my formulations have some originality.

Opposition 1. The advice literature is, at root, corrective, that is to say *proscriptive*. With one exception (discussed below), language advisers begin with examples that they treat as errors of some kind, requiring correction. Strictures are then formulated so as to cover these, and alternative, acceptable, variants are suggested. Don't write this, write *this*. Proscription first – don't split infinitives, don't end sentences with prepositions (in technical terminology, don't strand prepositions), don't use *hopefully* to mean 'I hope that, it is to be hoped that' (in technical terminology, don't use it as a speaker-oriented sentence adverbial) – prescription later.

Linguists formulate general rules, which they treat as hypotheses about what's in some variety of a language (and, by inference, what's not); the rules are hypotheses to be tested against the evidence of actual usage in this variety. Advice givers look at formulations of strictures as summaries of error types, codes you could put on errors that you detect in someone's writing; a system of strictures of this sort is fine if it provides a code for all the errors, but isn't necessarily accountable for non-errors, since those could be a matter of the right "ear for the language". A number of the advice books – not, alas, all of them – allow you to strand prepositions if that would sound ok, and they give some examples of acceptable stranding but very little guidance as to the circumstances in which stranding is acceptable.

In fact, it's a consequence of the proscriptive approach to grammar that most of the teaching is by example, even when a general stricture is formulated. The actual strictures in the handbooks are hard to interpret and almost invariably unclear as to their scope, so that the student who really wants to obey the proscription is obliged to extrapolate somehow from a handful of examples. Linguists' formulations of rules are always tentative, but their application is supposed to be entirely clear; and they can be refined and improved.

Opposition 2. The advice literature on language is *advice*, comparable to advice on diet, exercise, gardening, child rearing, relationships, and the like. It's a practical enterprise, and should be judged on how comprehensible it is for the intended audience, how easy it is for this audience to apply, and how good it is, that is, how often the advice steers the user away from infelicitous or ineffective writing and towards a felicitous and effective alternative. Linguists don't propose to tell you what to do, although they can tell you that if you use certain variants you might be judged to be ignorant or lazy, that if you use certain other variants your text will be hard to process, and so on.

As I noted above, language advice bears an uneasy relationship to linguistics. This uneasy relationship to the scientific literature is common in the advice literature, of all types. Advice is an admixture of bits of science, importations of folk theories, speculations from personal experience, and inspired guessing.

In line with this, in most domains advice givers are rarely scientific professionals in the relevant fields. (As Small (1998) observes, pediatricians are medical professionals, MDs in fact, but they're almost never experts on child development, despite the fact that they give lots of advice on the matter.) Advisers on language, in particular, are essayists, poets, editors, journalists, literary scholars, lawyers, translators, and other people who deal in a practical way with language, but scarcely ever experts on language structure and use.

Opposition 3. Language advice tends to be an expression of individual tastes, presented in the voice of a single person, while linguists rely on the collection of data about language structure and use, whether from field work, controlled experiments, collection of judgments, or mining of examples (from elite writers or from vernacular speakers or whoever).

One consequence of this difference is that works of language advice are almost all written by single authors, while linguists' reference grammars and usage surveys are, these days, almost all group projects.

Another consequence is that language advisers are routinely locked into disputes with one another about which choices to advocate. There's a high level of idiosyncrasy in their advice. (Cameron (1997) is sympathetic with ordinary people's desire for direction as to language use, as am I, but in her final chapter she draws the line at accepting recommendations from "authorities" who are simply retailing their personal likes and dislikes as instructions to others.)

Opposition 4. All languages require both some degree of *uniformity* (to allow for easy mutual communication) and some degree of *variety* (to allow for the expression of discourse organization, communicative purposes, and social and personal identities). Uniformity and variety are both "right", but they're in direct conflict with one another.   Language advisers tend to stress the uniformity end of the scale; linguists tend to celebrate variety.

Opposition 5. The advice literature is disinclined to settle for a mere description of established general formal standard written English, but again and again tries to argue that the features of this variety are *necessitated* by fundamental considerations like "logic", avoidance of

ambiguity, brevity, or the very concepts of syntax. Linguists recognize both social values of variants – how you speak both signals and constructs who you are – and also communicative values like ease/brevity, clarity/transparency, politeness, expressivenesss, regularity/analogy/systematicity, euphony, and iconicity; these are all useful qualities to have in a language, but (as with uniformity and variety) they are often in conflict, so that each variety represents its own, contingent, balance among the values.

Opposition 6. The advice literature tends to blur the lines between grammar, usage, mechanics, style, and rhetoric, even when these are treated in separate sections of a handbook. Some of the advice material, in fact, just accepts the folk conceptualization of "grammar", which encompasses everything in language that's regulated: syntax, morphology, pronunciation, word choice, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, linguistic politeness, coherence, paragraph organization, and more. Rules are rules.

Linguists distinguish different sorts of knowledge and abilities in these matters, use different vocabularies for talking about them, and assign different practical priorities to them.

Opposition 7. Language advisers (like advisers in other domains) look for *simple* strictures, easy-to-apply instructions. (Keep It Simple, Stupid.) As a result, they tend to downplay effects of context, whether social context or discourse context. One striking consequence of this way of approaching things is that the language advice literature is strongly inclined to judge sentences in isolation (and so to blur the line between grammar, usage, style, and rhetoric); it's extraordinarily *decontextualized.* Another consequence is that it tends to avoid technical apparatus – careful conceptualizations and choice of terminology – as much as possible, in favor of using a small set of familiar, but fuzzy, terms. Finally, it favors offenses that can be detected as mechanically as possible.

The linguistic literature, in contrast, recognizes that some part of linguistic structure is specifically syntactic, while other parts have to do with the way bits of information are deployed in discourses and with the way hearers cope with this information. Meanwhile, the linguistic literature recognizes that complex interactions among rules might be required, and that these rules might have to be framed in terms of novel concepts, requiring novel terms. These are things to be discovered, not to be taken off the shelf.

2. The project.

I propose a book recounting my experiences with and responses to the advice literature on English. The audience for this book is essentially the audience for the high-end advice books, like the Garner dictionaries: people who are curious about the way the language works and want advice about how to use it. Readers should come away from the book with a healthy skepticism about instruction on grammar and usage, an appreciation of the complexity and systematicity of their language, and a willingness to look at and listen to the way English is actually used. My aim is not merely to critique the advice literature, but to expose widespread unexamined assumptions about language, to demonstrate how these reflect and incorporate aspects of the wider culture, and to show how traditional approaches to language advice can be improved by an

infusion of ideas from various branches of linguistics (syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, lexicography, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics).

I'm hoping that the book will be engaging, but challenging. There's no reason why grammar, usage, style, and rhetoric should be presented as something no more complicated than multiplication tables, when in fact they are (at least) as intellectually interesting, and can be as rigorous, as symbolic logic or poetic form. Making the material attractive is pretty easy: almost everyone has had extended experience with the advice literature – I get queries about grammar and usage from friends and acquaintances every day, hundreds of queries a year, and I take these to be representative of a larger interest in such issues in (at least) modern western cultures – so that the only trick is introducing some irreducibly technical conceptual apparatus.

But the need for these technicalities can be seen to arise from the material of language itself, in a series of case studies. I now have years of experience in this approach to grammar and usage, in courses at Stanford (so far, two sophomore seminars and one Continuing Studies course on prescriptivism and usage), in postings to the American Dialect Society mailing list and the Language Log (a group blog on linguistic issues), and in postings to other mailing lists and newsgroups not specifically focused on language (I'm a linguist; people ask me for advice and offer me data).

After background chapters expanding on the presentation of the seven oppositions above, there will be a series of essays, roughly as follows:

1. Two case studies: the Possessive Antecedent Proscription and the Dangling Modifier Proscription. The Possessive Antecedent Proscription (PAP), in its simplest formulation, bars possessives as antecedents for pronouns, as in *Mary's father admires her* (*her* apparently has *Mary's* as its antecedent), and the Dangling Modifier Proscription (DMP) bars sentence-initial subjectless modifiers whose subject is not supplied by the subject of the main clause, as in *As a mother, the first concern I have is for the children* (the subject of *(be) a mother* is supplied not by the subject of the main clause, *concern*, but by the subject *I* of the relative clause).

Some version of the DMP appears in virtually every advice book, the PAP in only a few (and then only in the past sixty years or so; Opdycke (1941) is the earliest citation I've found), but the PAP gained some notoriety when it was the center of a flap over the scoring of the 2002 PSAT. Both seem to be motivated by processing considerations; some violations are troublesomely ambiguous or hard to process. Nevertheless, violations appear routinely in the writing of the best and most careful authors; in the case of the PAP, violations appear routinely in the writing even of those who explicitly advocate the stricture (for instance, Louis Menand, who advocates the PAP in Menand (2003)).

The advice literature offers decontextualized examples: single sentences. When placed in a suitable discourse context, however, or supplied with content that allows readers to bring real-world knowledge to bear on understanding the sentences, many of them become entirely acceptable (except to those who have become hypersensitized by instruction; see essay 8). As Bolinger (1983) pointed out in his critique of Barzun's version of the PAP, pronoun-antecedent linkages are not, for the most part, matter of syntax, but have to do with the foregrounding and

backgrounding of entities in discourse; in my terms, the offense of the (very rare) genuinely bad PAP examples is an offense of style, not of syntax. Similar remarks apply to the DMP: the denotation of the subject of the subjectless sentence adverbial must be a highly foregrounded, or topical, entity; this is usually the entity denoted by the subject of the main clause, but in the right circumstances this entity can be "picked up" from other sources.

Given what I've just said, it's unfortunate that a fair number of advice writers not only maintain that the PAP and DMP describe offenses against the syntax of English, but go on to claim that these strictures are necessitated by the very definitions of syntactic concepts like *antecedent* and *modifier*. That can't be right, and when the inadequate syntactic frameworks that these writers are working with are rebuilt, refined, and expanded, the problem disappears.

To summarize: the PAP isn't a principle of English at all, syntactic or otherwise (though a few of the situations it covers do exemplify difficulties in antecedent-finding). The DMP is mis-stated as a principle of syntax, but there is a phenomenon to be described, having to do with discourse conditions on interpreting certain elliptical constructions. Writers should be getting advice about how entities are introduced into a discourse, foregrounded, backgrounded, refreshed, and so on, instead of being given simple proscriptions that can be mechanically applied.

Having sketched this first essay in some detail, I'll now provide briefer proposals for each of the other essays.

2. Two classic demons: stranded prepositions, split infinitives. Here we are solidly in the domain of syntax and usage: what constructions are available and how to choose among alternatives. The high-end advice literature always points out that stranded prepositions (*Which parent does the child take after?*) and split infinitives (*We expect our profits to more than double in a year*) are not uniformly unacceptable, though from Fowler on it's inclined to caution against using these constructions except in special circumstances, recommending instead alternatives with fronted prepositions and with modifiers either preceding infinitival *to* or following the infinitival verb (the very dubious *After which parent does the child take?* and *We expect our profits more than to double in a year*).

Linguists point out that stranded prepositions and split infinitives have been widely used by the best writers for a long time, though there's a lot to be said about choosing among the alternatives. For prepositions, for instance, the stranded alternative is obligatory in certain constructions, barred in others, and permissible in still others, where factors like the semantic transparency of the preposition + object combination and the stylistic level (on an informal-to-formal scale) of the combination play a role. These are complex, but not at all chaotic, matters, and reference grammars of English, in particular Huddleston & Pullum (2002), provide nuanced discussions, while even the high-end advice literature just scratches the surface.

These two cases are interesting in two respects. The first is their history, which involves appeals to the structure of Latin, on the the assumption that Latin shows how languages in general are organized. There's a suggestion here that the strictures No Stranded Prepositions NSP) and No Split Infinitives (NSI) are in fact necessitated by the very nature of syntax.

The second reason these two cases are of interest is their extraordinary power and longevity in some parts of the low-end advice literature, like high school textbooks and preparation manuals for standardized tests, which are inclined to issue blanket prohibitions. Why should the NSP and NSI be so popular in these contexts? Because they're easy to apply, easy to drill, and easy to test in multiple-choice exams (see essay 7).

3. Stipulation rather than stricture: discriminations and hyperdiscrimination. There's one area in which the advice literature is fundamentally prescriptive rather than proscriptive (with prescription following on proscription): in discriminating between the uses of two linguistic items – usually words, but sometimes syntactic constructions or morphological forms – that are both acceptable in established general formal standard written English. For example: *partly* or *partially*?

MWDEU has illuminating presentations on several such discriminations, including *partly*/*partially*. In each case MWDEU reports contentiously divergent opinions in the advice literature, none of them fitting particularly well with actual usage by admirable writers. How could this happen, again and again?

I suggest that what we're seeing is the result of each writer placing the alternatives next to one another, so to speak, trying them out in various contexts, and extracting some generalization about when one seems to work and when the other does. Each author does this exercise independently.

Now you'd think that this sort of side-by-side comparison – as in wine tasting or test-driving cars – would lead to a heightened ability to discriminate and greater accuracy in doing so, but in the linguistic case we're not tapping relatively simple judgments, but general hypotheses about how the language is used. This meta-task invites the judge to seek out differences, and in many cases the task produces hyperdiscrimination, or outright hallucinations and fabrications, though with the best of intentions. I've had students conjure up pronunciation differences between *whole* and *hole* and between *see* and *sea*, based, presumably, on the difference in spellings. I've had people conjure up denotational differences between *sofa* and *couch* – many different sorts of denotational differences – even when there was no reason to think that my informants had a semantic difference here (some people do). I've had professional colleagues conjure up almost certainly artifactual social differences in the U.S. usage of *sort of* vs. *kind of* when asked about how the expressions were used. Lexicographers report that colleagues discover finer and finer meaning distinctions for entries the longer they think about them.

My suggestion is that this sort of hyperdiscrimination is at work in the advice literature, and that it's one result of language advisers working, in effect, as independent contractors.

4. The diversity of the literature on grammar and usage. Beyond the fairly sharp split between the literature of analysis (largely produced by linguists) and the literature of advice, the literature of advice is itself mulifarious. There are complaints, mockery, authoritative usage advice, grammar and usage manuals for students, style manuals for authors and editors (focused

on mechanics), advice on effective writing and/or speaking. The audiences for these works are different, the aims of the works are different, and the stances the authors take towards their audiences are different.

Even when these variables are, roughly, held constant, language advisers exhibit significant personal differences. There are (often defensively proud) "sticklers" like Wallace (2001) and Fiske (2004), who revel in their role as guardians of the gates. There are also generous and practical advisers like Bernstein (1971).

In this essay I survey some of this diversity, returning to the PAP as an exemplary proscription.   Here I note that a significant brake on diversity in the advice literature comes from market effects: works with similar audiences tend to converge. College handbooks are far more similar than would be predicted by chance; material that appears in one will almost surely be covered in its close competitors.

5. Prescriptivism and politics. The basic values of *variety* – favoring innovation, in political terms, fostered by liberty – and *uniformity* – favoring conservatism, in political terms, fostered by authority – in language are in constant tension. The advice literature tends to be strongly conservative in linguistic terms (it's profoundly suspicious of "liberalizing" linguistic innovations, those that introduce new elements or introduce new contexts for the use of old elements), but the connection between this kind of linguistic conservatism and political conservatism is famously tenuous: a lot of political liberals are really tight-assed and censorious about language variation, and some notable linguistic liberals have been politically conservative.

In this essay I show how the values of variety and uniformity in the political sphere are just as much in conflict with one another as in the linguistic sphere, so that we wouldn't expect an alignment of the values in the two spheres. Such values are highly context-bound, not abstract ideas.

6. What I say and what I do. A puzzle from the advice literature: how can people who inveigh so strongly against particular forms and usages employ them so easily and thoughtlessly in their own writing? As far as I can tell, *everyone* who advocates the PAP violates it flagrantly and repeatly in their own writing, as soon as their attention is off the mechanics of their writing.

It turns out that there are lots of ways this could happen, and outright hypocrisy is just one of them (probably not a very frequent one). I survey these, and suggest that most of them arise from a disconnection between what we do (unconsciously) and what we (consciously) think we do.

7. So you want to be a grammar god? Testing grammatical competence. Here I look at tests of "grammatical competence", for instance a Grammar God web site. (Yes, I figured out how to game the site and get a perfect Grammar God score.) The advice literature as pop culture.

One striking characteristic of such tests is that they lump together word choice, morphological forms, syntactic constructions, spelling, punctuation and capitalization, and so on,

under the heading of "grammar": everything that is regulated in language. (Or: everything you were taught in high school English that didn't have to do with literature.) This is far from an accident.

The advice literature encourages this view, but then the advice literature scarcely invented it. How, after all, can we test facility with language? Like, test it in a multiple-choice exam?

I start by reflecting on the way that standardized academic testing, personality tests, and opinion polls have come to make the multiple-choice exam pervasive in modern life. Once that's a given, there's not a lot of play in testing "grammar" by such means. The items have to be easy to test. In addition, they pretty much have to be things that are taught in school; there would be no point in testing details of grammar that native speakers of English agree about and don't need instruction on, like the unacceptable placement of the adverbial in *I saw yesterday Kim* or the incorrect plural *informations* 'pieces of information' (though these items would be appropriate for a test of English as a Second Language). We're left with non-standard usages (multiple negation, as in *I didn't see no dog*, and third-person singular *don't*); frequently reviled innovations (speaker-oriented *hopefully*, the nominative pronoun in *between you and I*); the rogues' gallery of disputed usages (split infinitives); common errors in word choice (*imply/infer*) and spelling (*alot*); and arbitrary conventions for the mechanics of writing (ordering of periods and commas with respect to quotation marks). The result is a test that has almost nothing to do with the ability to write, but a lot to do with the strictures of the advice literature.

8. The linguistic perils of instruction: hypersensitivity, avoidance, contamination, hypercorrection, reversal. It's long been known that instruction in the established general formal standard written language can induce shame in those with innovative, regional, informal, non-standard, or primarily spoken variants. Here I want to address subtler effects.

The first is that explicit instruction can make people hypersensitive to some element. If you've been taught the PAP, you probably can't get out from under it. When I present the sentence *Mary's father admires her* to speakers of English, most of them have no clue what the issue is. But some instantly judge it as "bad" – and these are always people who've been explicitly taught some version of the PAP. They've been ruined as judges of their native language, at least in this respect.

The hypersensitivity effect is very strong. People who've been taught the DMP, NSP, NSI, and similar proscriptions can't *not* notice an occurrence of one of these structures. It grates on them.

In line with this, people who've been instructed that some structure is unacceptable will avoid it. They will also avoid similar structures, which become. in effect, contaminated by the original offender. If you've been taught the NSP, you might find stranded infinitival *to*, as in *I don't want to,* as unacceptable as straightforward stranded prepositional *to*, even though they have nothing to do with one another in modern English.

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A further effect is that those who have had instruction may hypercorrect, by "fixing" perfectly acceptable versions: *kitching* (for *kitchen*), *chicking* (for *chicken*), *childring* (for *children*), produced by people who were told "not to drop their *g*'s".

Finally, some speakers who trust in their own linguistic judgments might actually reverse things. If you've been taught that there's something important about *lie/lay* and are sure that *I'll lay down on the couch* is perfectly ordinary, then you might well object that *I'll lie down on the couch* is just wrong. It happens.

9. The thin line between error and mere variation: beyond typos and thinkos. Nunberg's (2004) essay on the pronunciation *nucular* draws a distinction between "typos" and "thinkos" – in the terms of Zwicky (1980) between inadvertent errors, things that are "wrong" for the person who produces them, and advertent errors, things that are ok so far as the producer is concerned but "wrong" from the point of view of at least some other people. (Faced with a typo, you call in the psycholinguist; faced with a thinko, you call in the sociolinguist.)

People frequently react to thinkos like *nucular* as if they were typos. "Why does he *keep* making that same mistake?" they ask. The answer is, of course, that he thinks this variant is the right one for him; it's the variant used by people he believes himself to be like, it's the variant that projects a persona that suits him, it's the variant that fits the pattern of other technical adjectives in *–ar*, like *molecular*. It has social, psychological, and linguistic value. So he resists correction. What others treat as error, he treats as mere variation.

In fact, the deviance of thinkos ranges from extremely high, as in clear examples of malapropisms, to extremely low, as in violations of the more fanciful proscriptivist pronouncements, like the PAP. At the high-deviance end, for example, there's the malapropism *behest* [*beset*] *with all these difficulties*, written by someone who meant to write *behest* (and was willing to defend this word choice). This is an idiosyncratic error. But as we look at further examples of thinkos, we see "errors" that are more and more widespread in the population, until it becomes difficult to classify them as errors at all; instead, they are non-standard, informal, or regional variants, and eventually some of them attain standard status:

> Behest: *behest with all these difficulties* [for *beset*]
> Retart: *What a retart!* [for *retard* 'retarded person']
> Nucular: *a nucular arms treaty* [for *nuclear*]
> Hone In On: *hone in on a solution* [for *home in on*]
> Anothing Thing Coming: *have another thing coming* [for *another think coming*]
> Substitute OLD: *substitute* OLD *with/by* NEW [for *replace*]

Another thing coming beats *another think coming* on Google nearly 4 to 1; it's the only version known to most people under 30, and, so far as I can tell, it's the only version used by Australians. As for *substitute* OLD *with/by* NEW, some years the Merriam-Webster dictionary staff decided to list it, without usage labels, in all of their dictionaries, as a use of *substitute* (along with the older use in *substitute* NEW *for* OLD); they decided it had become a standard variant. Eventually we have to recognize that the ship of linguistic change has sailed.

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The advice literature rarely makes distinctions in the world of thinkos; advisers tend to hold the line with equal tenacity against all innovations, even those of the 19th century. But genuinely useful advice would be more nuanced.

3. Plan of Work.

All the chapters already exist in some form – in a few cases as drafts or as postings to the net, in others as outlines, in still others as notes for classes. What I need is a significant stretch of unencumbered time to work the whole thing into final shape.

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