## Contents

Preface	ge ix
PART I VOWEL CONTRASTS AND THEIR DEPLOYMENT	
IN ENGLISH: 'LENGTH' AND 'SYSTEM'	I
On the 'two kinds of vowels' in English Appendix: On defining pseudo-features: some	3
characteristic arguments for 'tenseness'	39
2 Rules, metarules, and the shape of the Great Vowel Shift 3 The Great Vowel Shift and its aftermath in the North	51
Midlands: more evidence for the vowel-cluster hypothesis	86
PART II EXPANDING THE DATA-BASE: THE YIELD OF	
COMPARATIVE METHOD	103
4 What kind of vowel was Middle English /a/, and what	
really happened to it?  Appendix: Some remarks on ME /ā/ and OE /a/ and /ā/	105
5 Middle English /ɔ/ in New York City English	135
PART III ISSUES IN GENERAL THEORY: FEATURES,	
RULES AND CLASSES	143
6 On the phonological characterization of [?] and [h] 7 Complementary modes of description in phonology: the	145
7 Complementary modes of description in phonology: the problem of 'natural classes'	168
EPILOGUE	
Linguistics as metaphysics: on the rationality of	
non-empirical theories	213
References	221
Index	233