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EATING AND ETHICS IN SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLAND

David B. Goldstein argues for a new understanding of Renaissance England from the perspective of communal eating. Rather than focusing on traditional models of interiority, choice, and consumption, Goldstein demonstrates that eating offered a central paradigm for the ethics of community-formation. The book examines how sharing food helps build, demarcate, and destroy relationships – between eater and eaten, between self and other, and among different groups. Tracing these eating relations from 1547 to 1680 – through Shakespeare, Milton, religious writers, and recipe-book authors – Goldstein shows that to think about eating was to engage in complex reflections about the body's role in society. In the process, he radically rethinks the communal importance of the Protestant Eucharist. Combining historicist literary analysis with insights from social science and philosophy, the book's arguments reverberate well beyond the Renaissance. Ultimately, *Eating and Ethics* forces us to rethink our own relationship to food.

DAVID B. GOLDSTEIN is Associate Professor of English at York University in Toronto. He writes on issues related to Shakespeare, early modern and Renaissance literature, food studies, and contemporary poetry. He has received numerous grants and awards, including fellowships at the Huntington Library, the Lilly Library, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A former food magazine editor and restaurant critic, he is also a widely published poet.

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*For my parents, who taught me how to eat.
For Mindy, Noa, and Micah, my constant commensals.*

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Acknowledgments

From its infancy, this book has received nourishment from a long and generous list of critics, cooks, and friends. Academia is often thought of as a solitary profession, designed for antisocial lovers of musty archives. For my part, I'm happiest when scholarly research feels like table talk. My ideas have always formed in the crucible of conversation, and I owe my most general debt to all those with whom I've had the privilege of discussing and honing my notions about eating, ethics, literature, and living.

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Various pieces of the book began as articles, invited talks, and conference papers. A version of Chapter 1 appeared in *Shakespeare Studies*. I worked out bits of the first section in a review article in *Literature Compass* and in an entry for the *Greenwood Shakespeare Encyclopedia*, and of the second section in entries on recipe writers for the Blackwell *Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature*. My ideas about Levinas found first expression in an article published in *Gastronomica*. I thank audiences and organizers at various academic gatherings, including the Modern Language Association, Shakespeare Association of America, Renaissance Society of America, Conference on Food Justice, Société Française Shakespeare, and Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies, among many others, for the nuance and challenge they brought to my ideas.

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