That first provocative issue of Darra Goldstein's *Gastronomica* in February 2001 got our attention. The cover was a close-up of a woman in ecstasy, sucking on a man's hand. Who noticed the tiny subtitle “The Journal of Food and Culture”? Movie buffs knew the image from Luis Buñuel's *L'Age d’Or*, scandalous in 1930. Food buffs relished its sexiness. Literary buffs tasted its wit.

From first to last, the quarterly *Gastronomica* was erotic, visionary, unpredictable, witty, sophisticated, intelligent, exhilarating, fun! For the next decade, as America's food revolution took off, so did *Gastronomica*. It was a kind of artful flying circus grounded by footnotes, rooted in human scholarship, and subsidized by a university press.

Goldstein's unlikely crossover between academic and popular ways of looking at food helped foster the burgeoning of food studies within universities. She could be scholarly without being stuffy. Mitchell Davis, himself a bridge between the James Beard Foundation and New York University's food studies program (from which he received a Ph.D.), recounts how her magazine “skillfully explores all the cultural diversity and richness of food without foregoing any of its deliciousness.” As *Gastronomica* developed into “a New Yorker for foodies,” he says, “It made you proud to be a foodie.”

Goldstein was uniquely equipped to launch such a magazine. She had crossed borders not only on the map but also in the mind and imagination, plugging brains into guts and words into images to create new ways of plugging food into meanings. While her credentials were impeccable as the Francis Christopher Oakely Third Century Professor of Russian at Williams College, in Williamstown, Massachusetts, she also had toured America for Stolichnaya vodka and had consulted for restaurants like the *Russian Tea Room* and *Firebird*. While she wrote scholarly essays, she also curated exhibits for the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, wrote articles for the popular food glossies, published four cookbooks—*A Taste of Russia, The Georgian Feast, The Winter Vegetarian*, and *Baking Boot Camp*—and initiated the University of California Press series of California Studies in Food and Culture.

But her real training was as a global adventurer. During the 1970s and '80s she studied Russian at the Universities of Helsinki, Leningrad, Moscow, and Stockholm. She traveled throughout the Soviet Union into Central Asia, Ulan Bator, the Caucasus, and Israel. She was rousted up by the KGB, threatened by borderland machine guns in Georgia and Abkhazia, and denied a Soviet visa.

Over the past 12 years, Goldstein grew her journal in the belief that "food goes to the core of who we are or want to be.” She conceived it after she’d taught her dream course at Williams. “Feasting and Fasting in Russian History,” which looked at a millennium of Russian culture through food. “I decided to embrace my passion,” she recalls. She used multiple voices to evoke the multiple meanings of food for “a diverse and idiosyncratic audience.” She connected the pleasure of food in all its rich sensuousness with an awareness of the deeper and darker issues food provokes.

She wanted to create a new audience, and she did. With just a single recipe, *Gastronomica* built a circulation of 30,000 from both subscriptions and store sales, attracting a mix of professionals and home cooks, as well as the academic-mind-
This fresh cheese resembles a Fresh Mozzarella ball, but when split open, you will be delighted to discover a rich-tasting soft filling of pieces of Mozzarella and heavy cream inside. Slice Burrata and serve on leaves of endive or toasted crostini for a simple and tasty appetizer. Each ball is hand-formed, made to order and packaged in water for a 37 day shelf life.

Betty Fussell is the highly acclaimed author of books and articles on food travel, movies, theater, and the arts. Her work has appeared in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Travel and Leisure, and more. She was also the Food Arts Silver Spoon recipient in June 2002.