Books like this one can sound like one long soliloquy, when really they are the product and, ideally, the progenitor of many conversations. As I scan these pages, they are not silent; rather, I can almost hear the voices of the many people who helped to make this book what it is. They stand at the margins, next to the passages that they cared about or the points they wished me to emphasize or omit, their voices rising and falling in encouragement, in argument, in advice, in entreaty. Even though I did not always heed their counsel, I am very grateful for their efforts. Our conversations shaped the contours of this book.

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