



Grantland Quarterly: Vol 1

Bill Simmons (Editor), Dan Fierman (Editor)

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Grantland Quarterly is a collaboration between McSweeney's and Bill Simmons's new web magazine Grantland. It will feature the best sports writing from the website, delivered in a full-color book featuring original artwork and a host of print-exclusives—including original fiction, new writing from editor-in-chief Bill Simmons, posters and pull-out sections, old-school baseball cards and mini-booklets, and a cover that looks and feels like you're holding a basketball. Like its namesake website, Grantland Quarterly will regularly include some of the most exciting and form-pushing sports writers currently plying the trade, including Chuck Klosterman, Malcolm Gladwell, Tom Bissell, Harris Wittels, John Brandon, Anna Clark, Chris Jones, Colson Whitehead, and many more.

Grantland Quarterly: Vol 1 Details

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From Reader Review Grantland Quarterly: Vol 1 for online ebook

Marie says

The only other subscription I anticipated as much as this is for the other McSweeney publication "Lucky Peach" (for the foodies...vol. 4 coming soon!)

I don't have time to visit the website everyday, this gives me the best of all it has to offer in one spot. Up to Volume 2 so far. Must read for any sportswriting fans.

Kyle says

So you might be asking why I would pay \$20 for a book whose content is available for free online, and on top of that give it a five star rating. Well, cognitive dissonance is a wonderful thing.

But:

1.)Grantland.com puts out a TON of articles each day. If for whatever reason I don't get to the site for a few days I can easily miss a great article and never come across it. This quarterly publication collects the best of Grantland and though I remembered reading many of the articles within, there were quite a few I had missed that I really enjoyed.

2.)I love books and this thing is a piece of art. The cover looks and feels like a basketball. The illustrations are beautiful. The layout and design are great. One minor complaint is I don't like the footnote text color (a bit too light) but overall the book is a great looking addition to my library.

So yup I bought it. And the articles are great. I really love that Grantland does extended pieces of sports that don't get a lot of mainstream love. I love Brian Phillips piece on Federer and David Shoemaker's piece on professional wrestling got me to tune back into Monday Night Raw. Jess Walter's fiction was a welcome addition and the three Simmon's articles were awesome as always.

Zach Ayers says

Unless the conversation is about American League baseball, 1987 - 93, I'm hopeless when it comes to sports conversation. I can maybe name ten NFL players only because of my combined knowledge of Dorito/DirecTV/Pepsi commercials and the one pack of '87 Topps football cards I bought on accident when I was seven. I feel like since I haven't been a fan for so long that starting now would only seem phony. This is also the way I feel about Twitter.

Grantland didn't/doesn't talk down to me, as so many Monday-morning coworkers. The essays are digestible. And they're good to include a sidebar of facts if the story is about, say, the OSU coaching scandal. So if I can get all my sports information from a quarterly lit journal, I will gladly subscribe. (I realize that's like getting

all my pornography from Lady Chatterley's Lover.) I read that all the essays in this quarterly are also found on the Grantland website but I just can't bring myself to read anything on the web that's longer than a Groupon ad. Grantland Quarterly, I really hope you're true to the name. I'll subscribe, even if it means paying \$20 for essays that are free online (see: Sunday New York Times).

Twobusy says

Like the ESPN-hosted site from which the vast majority of its content is pulled, Grantland Quarterly Vol 1 is largely (if not always) successful — and your ability to enjoy its contents depends largely on your interest in the subject matter at hand. Overall, the writing is fluent and enjoyable, and in some cases strong enough to engage you in something you otherwise might not have explored (for me, that would be the very fun piece about cricket in India). The best articles, which include an oral history of The National Sports Daily (I only wish the massive & massively dull oral history of ESPN was half as entertaining as this article) and a piece by Chuck Klosterman (whom I usually do not enjoy) on a JuCo basketball game in North Dakota, are full-on fascinating.

Of course... not every article reaches these standards. Several articles, including those written by Simmons himself, come across as blog posts that once removed from the immediacy of their context lose a considerable amount of their shine and interest. And, as is always the case in a compendium like this, a couple of articles simply fall flat.

Overall? I enjoyed it. I'll probably pick up the next one when it comes out. But I'm not going to try to sell you (or anyone I know) on the idea that this is essential sports and pop culture writing. On that standard, Grantland Quarterly falls a bit short.

Kyle Pennekamp says

My esteemed writing partner gave me this collection for the birthday. First off: if you're a sports fan and you're not already reading the Grantland website, you should be. It's great. Fantastic pieces on every sport under the sun (plus the occasional piece on Hollywood, the New York Times, music, etc.) by great writers like Bill Simmons, Malcolm Gladwell, and Chuck Klosterman.

This is a collection of what the editorial staff deemed the best pieces of their first quarter year in existence.

Some of the pieces are stunningly good. Simmon's piece on LeBron "The LeBrondown, Part 2" leads off the collection, and might be the best. It's a piece written by a fan experiencing what might be the best part of fandom: the ability you believe you have, after following a particular team or player obsessively, for long enough, to break them down psychologically and offer insights about their character that a lesser fan cannot.

Michael Weinrab's piece on "Statis Pro Baseball" is about the meeting place between obsession and imagination in children. Schur and Dimeo's piece on Cricket is laugh-out-loud funny. Simmons' piece on Ryan Reynolds is devastatingly accurate. There's a great short story by Jess Walter, and, of course, the classic first Humblebrag writing.

But let's talk about the best part of the book: the book itself. Published and designed by those uber-hip

literatis at McSweeney's, this might be the nicest book of the last 5 years. Bound in dimpled pigskin, every page is individually designed, colored, and laid out. It is, in the genuine sense of the word, a pleasure to hold and look out.

Well done by everyone involved. I look forward to next quarter's collection.

Patrick Brown says

This is a collection of pieces from *Grantland*, so if you're looking for material you wouldn't find on the site, you're out of luck. That being said, what you will find is a collection of some of their better pieces and some beautiful, beautiful design work. The cover of the book looks like a basketball. At first, I was like "This will be lame," but holding it in my hands, I have to say, it's a real pleasure of an object.

My favorite pieces from this:

* Colson Whitehead's "Occasional Dispatches from the Republic of Anhedonia." The author plays in the World Series of Poker and writes about the game as the soul-crushing, numbing experience it can be. Beautiful, hilarious prose and some true insights on life, as well as gambling. Simply the best thing I read this year, in any form.

* Michael Schur and Nate DiMeo watch the World Cup of Cricket. Schur created *Parks & Recreation* (and used to run the brilliant, hilarious *Fire Joe Morgan*), and the observations on cricket from a non-fan's perspective are great.

* Bill Simmons on Hoosiers. I go back and forth on Bill Simmons, but this piece has some great stuff, like pointing out what a terrible tactician Gene Hackman is in this movie, or how many points Jimmy Chitwood must have scored in the state final.

I think the book borrows a little of its design from *Free Darko*, but I'm willing to look past that and say that this is book well worth reading and owning.

Hans says

I have never been a sports fan. I don't even watch the Super Bowl for the commercials. I'm lucky if I realize that the World Series is actually happening or if the basketball strike is still going. And I couldn't even tell you what *The Decision* was until I read the article in *Grantland*.

So why did I read this? (And why am I so glad that I did read it?)

I trust the McSweeney's credentials. I know I'll find strong writing and great design [what a cover!]. And it will be interesting even if it isn't my main interest area.

All that was true.

And I was pleased to find that the topics were closer to the breadth found in the orange "sports and leisure"

questions from the Genus edition of Trivial Pursuit. The side bars give the perfect assist to those who need additional background.

I won't start listing favorite pieces because you'll basically have the table of contents, but the insert about *The National* is pure gold.

Can't wait for the next quarterly! (And glad this supports and highlights the writing at <http://grantland.com>.)

Ken says

Just finished this one, and I think it convinced me to subscribe to the quarterly for the next year. Most of the readings are pretty evergreen even though they are taken from a sports and pop culture site.

At least the authors take risks with their writing and the mastermind behind it all (Sports Guy) is ambitious with his scope. I could have done without the insert about the National which acts as a built in justification for it being ok if Grantland bombs. Less because of the work itself (it was probably the best non-klosterman/gladwell piece) and more because of its not so veiled commentary on how great Simmons' new website is.

The best thing about the quarterly is the removal of 'pressure' to keep up with the website. It seems all media today is built around a slavish dedication to complete consumption. I grew up being able to miss an episode of Seinfeld and still like the show. Now I am terrified of watching TV outside of Spike and ESPN because I may have missed the whole thing.

Part of this is because technology has allowed us to change how we consume media (DVR, Netflix, website archives) and part of it is because current climates dictate that good tv, books and movies are serialized, not compartmentalized. Like homeland. I heard about it when the third episode came out. Barely into the season and I am telling people, "I'm going to wait for the DVDs to come out"

Well this quarterly is the DVDs of this website, with a slight twist. It not only acts as a warehouse of the articles, it is a filter of the truly good. If you like the website, enjoyed any of the articles found inside, or have a love of covers made out of alternative materials, it's worth the time.

Ricky Carrigan says

This collection is slightly better than Vol.3 but still not as great as Vol.2. The bad; there are two overly hagiographic pieces near the beginning, one about a father(sorry), and the other is aptly titled "A Man Of God", by Chris Jones. I think Chris Jones might actually believe racing legend Ayrton Senna was sent to Earth from Heaven to entertain us and inevitably make us cry when he dies in a car crash. Everything about this piece is gratuitous, and is a disservice to Senna, and those that loved him.

The good; a fantastic piece on Ty Cobb, and the city of Detroit, the Simmons/Klosterman/Gladwell pieces are great as usual, Jimmy Kimmel writes a great piece titled "Father's Day" that avoids all the pitfalls of Jane Leavy's "One Round", and a weirdly satisfying Colson Whitehead piece on playing poker in Atlantic City. It's full of errors, and typos, but Whitehead is a fucking great writer and nothing can cover that up. The mini-book in the middle is also a high point in this collection. I was 2 years old when The National Sports Daily began its brief existence. I only know of the legend of Frank Deford, and his 2-3 minute segments on NPR, so reading about this Great Sports Writing experiment was a pleasure. The connection between The National and Grantland is obvious now, and it's a shame neither lasted longer than they did. We need better sports writing, now more than ever.

David says

Merry Xmas to me!

Mike Smith says

More great writing from Grantland - though of course some of it was just joyful rereading. But the book presentation really does add to the columns. Can't wait for #2!

Jordan Ashcraft says

A wide ranging collection of essays from Grantland.com. You will enjoy most of it, but with most anthologies, you are not going to enjoy every single piece.

Ian Hardouin says

1st edition of the Grantland Quarterly Journal with selected pieces from Grantland's first few months during the Summer of 2011. For fans of the site, Bill Simmons, and 30 for 30, this needs no introduction.

Writing covers sports, pop culture, and associated features, along with nice illustrations available only in the Quarterly book, and a cover that resembles and feels like a basketball.

Better pieces include:

Chuck Klosterman - Div III college basketball in North Dakota

Anna Clark - Ty Cobb as Detroit

Robert Mays - oral history of Friday Night Lights

Alex French & Howie Kahn - oral history of the National Sports Daily

Malcolm Gladwell - NBA Ownership

Andy Greenwald - Character actors on HBO shows

Katie Baker - Matrimonial Moneyball (Classic!)

RIP Grantland

evan says

Bonus points for the physical design of the book - beautifully laid out, great illustrations. This is a collection of pieces that have already been on the Grantland website, with only a sprinkling of new material, but they did a good job of selecting the best writing from the first ~6 months of the website, so it doesn't feel like there's a lot of filler.

Luke says

The best writing from my favorite website superbly designed and thoughtfully curated = an absurdly enjoyable bathroom or road trip or bedside book. If you like writing or sports or movies or music or art or quality things made by human beings, you should buy it.
