



Granta 139: Best of Young American Novelists

Sigrid Rausing

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The third volume of Granta's renowned and prescient, Best of Young American Novelists

Every ten years, *Granta* devotes an issue to new American fiction by writers under the age of forty, showcasing the young novelists deemed to be the best of their generation – writers of remarkable achievement and promise.

In 1997 and 2007 we picked out such luminaries as Edwidge Danticat, Jeffrey Eugenides, Jonathan Safran Foer, Jonathan Franzen, Nicole Krauss, Lorrie Moore, Yiyun Li, Karen Russell and Gary Shteyngart.

In this special issue, we bring you *Granta's* Best of Young American Novelists of 2017: twenty-one outstanding writers, each able to capture the preoccupations of modern America.

Jesse Ball, Halle Butler, Emma Cline, Joshua Cohen, Mark Doten, Jen George, Rachel B. Glaser, Lauren Groff, Yaa Gyasi, Garth Risk Hallberg, Greg Jackson, Sana Krasikov, Catherine Lacey, Ben Lerner, Karan Mahajan, Anthony Marra, Dinaw Mengestu, Ottessa Moshfegh, Chinelo Okparanta, Esmé Weijun Wang, Claire Vaye Watkins

These are the novelists you will soon be reading, chosen by panel of judges who are themselves acclaimed writers: Patrick deWitt, A.M. Homes, Kelly Link, Ben Marcus and Sigrid Rausing.

Granta 139: Best of Young American Novelists Details

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From Reader Review Granta 139: Best of Young American Novelists for online ebook

Taylor says

Honestly the best part about this collection was that I discovered so many wonderful female writers. There were a couple good male contributions but the women just hit it out of the park; I was floored.

Jeffrey Milloy says

I guess the novelist issue just isn't for me. I like Granta for its longer nonfiction, and with none of those (nor poetry, photo series, etc) and extra length, I had to give up on this issue. A lot of the same myopic themes, some excerpts which I rarely enjoy, unfinished work... for the first time Granta felt like a chore. It would be better to cut it in half to around 10 selections at most, and even then to split them across two issues along with other content.

"I love you but I've chosen darkness" was very good.

Jason Robinson says

3.5- A solidly good, but not great collection. Most of the stories were quite readable, some compelling, but with a couple of duds. The stories that I flag as duds tend to engage some type of experimental writing. I like to be challenged on occasion, but I prefer straightforward writing. As I have stated before, I am intelligent, but not an academic, and my reading is primarily for leisure.

Vania Stoyanova says

Granta 139 is a very good collection of young American novelists. The stories are mostly well-written and engaging. I enjoyed reading them. The collection is a good mix of styles and voices. It's a nice surprise to find so many good stories in one issue. I would recommend it to anyone who enjoys reading contemporary fiction. The stories are mostly well-written and engaging. I enjoyed reading them. The collection is a good mix of styles and voices. It's a nice surprise to find so many good stories in one issue. I would recommend it to anyone who enjoys reading contemporary fiction.

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<https://knijensviat.wordpress.com/201...>

Keith says

Sadly- as I've been a Granta subscriber for over 30 years, this was the most disappointing issue of Granta I've yet read. If this is the state of the new hopes for American literature ...

RAFAEL GÓMEZ SALES says

Los narradores norteamericanos de hoy en día están preocupados por el terrorismo en la vida diaria, pero también por el actual gobierno de EEUU, las nuevas tecnologías, la inmigración, el feminismo y el modo de vida... me han gustado bastante varios relatos del libro, sobre todo el de Emma Cline, Los Ángeles, donde una chica que se muda a L.A. para ser actriz acaba haciendo algo muy distinto, sobre todo por la forma de contarlo y las imágenes y porque tiene ese aire actual que te sumerge de golpe en el relato. También el de Yaa Gassi, un cuento sobre inmigración y los sueños frustrados de la comunidad senegalesa de NY. El traje de carne de Garth Risk Hallberg tiene también ese sabor actual, que mezcla yoga y adolescencia, Día 4 de Rachel B. Glasser cuenta cómo se afronta una muerte querida, el de Dinah Mengestu sobre las enfermedades y la muerte o los dos últimos, el de Esmé, que tratan acerca de una chica a la que le van a aplicar los TEC y el de Claire Vale Watkins, que narra lo que ocurre cuando un ex se muere.

Pearse Anderson says

Ending on "I Love You But I've Chosen Darkness" was a great move. That story is probably the best thing I have read this season. Others really got me going, like Butler's "The New Me," Cline's "Los Angeles," or Mengestu's "This is Our Descent." Then, the collection featured a round of stories that didn't act of me too much. I couldn't finish "Trump Sky Alpha," or "The Meat Suit," or "Uri" or "Country & Eastern." Anthony Marra had a cute piece that was enjoyable, as were "The Answers," "Bright Circle," and "All the Caged Things." But those didn't cement my trust in the authors like some others. The penultimate story, "What Terrible Thing It Was," really was dull.

BUT these are new voices. Clearly youngin' that are up and comin'. And I loved that. I loved being able to see trends and tones and settings that I think the old guard is forgetting (or never new) and this next crop is rallying around. It worked! So although the stories fell short for a good third or more of them. But it gets four stars. Thanks Strand! Glad I didn't wait until I had access to Oberlin's Granta subscription to pick up this issue.

Eric says

This is a pretty solid collection and I'm looking forward to checking out the novels of many of the authors therein.

In particular, I thought Mark Doten's dystopian tale was a tour-de-force, and Ottessa Moshfegh's tale was surreal and creepy.

Others I liked:

Jesse Ball
Halle Butler
Emma Cline
Jen George
Lauren Goff
Yas Gyasi
Garth Risk Hallberg
Greg Jackson
Sana Krasikov
Anthony Marra

Gwendolyn says

This is not my favorite Granta issue. It is quite a bit longer than usual. Some of the stories (2-3) are great, but many of them are excerpts from longer works and feel incomplete in this format. Also, I miss the variety of having some essays and poetry mixed in with short stories. I do think that the list of the best young writers is wonderfully diverse and fresh, though. I congratulate Granta on that aspect.

Neil says

It's taken me a long time to read through the 21 pieces included in this collection, but that is partly because I went on holiday for 2 weeks and forgot to take it with me. It's a mixed bag that I found overall OK with a few great stories and a couple of very poor ones. But, I imagine, this is probably the case for everyone who reads it and it is simply that the list of good/bad ones changes for each person.

I thought the first and last stories were the two strongest (by Jesse Ball and Claire Vaye Watkins respectively), although you have to like your reading to have surreal element if you are going to like Jesse Ball's contribution.

There's a good mixture of experimental and more conventional writing. My other favourites were by Joshua Cohen, Rachel B. Glaser and Yaa Gyasi. For my personal tastes, the whole collection was tainted by an unpleasant and pointless story from Ottessa Moshfegh, but then I fell into the camp that disliked her Man Booker nominated novel last year and this is of a similar, but more unpleasant, ilk.

Overall, I think it provides an interesting cross-section of American writing, although I am sure it misses out

a lot of what is happening. Some names to keep an eye out for, definitely, which makes it worthwhile spending the time reading it. My rating derives from an average of the ratings I gave to each individual contribution: that gave me 3.2 which I felt was actually a bit higher than I wanted to rate the complete collection, so I rounded it down.

Leo Robertson says

Mixed bag as these things always are. Lauren Groff still great.

Keep T-Prez out your fiction though! Hasn't he infected enough? What are you gonna tell me about him anyway? You didn't think he was gonna win and now you're playing the zeitgeist card? No.

Jatan says

The authors of my favorite stories in this anthology, in no particular order, are:

1. Emma Cline
 2. Rachel Glaser
 3. Karan Mahajan
 4. Garth Risk Hallberg
 5. Ottessa Moshfegh
 6. Lauren Groff
 7. Catherine Lacey
 8. Greg Jackson
 9. Joshua Cohen
 10. Dinaw Mengestu
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