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Kerry Howley

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Kerry Howley : Thrown before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thrown:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good attempt at the rarely seen side of MMA fightsBy K Chibal love the concept here of going into the smaller shows (i.e.: non UFC) where we can see what the majority of no-name fighters really have to go through in their lives. She finds two opposite subjects to learn from which was great. But I felt she may have been a little more interested in her own experience than those details of the fighters. Don't get me wrong, their is some good descriptions of events and what happens there, but I feel the focus is more on minutia that allows her to showcase how eloquent she is. So, I was a bit overwhelmed with her speech rather than the events in

front of her at times, but definitely worth a read if you want a less known picture of the regional MMA scene. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Worth reading, but fundamentally flawed

By Customer I have some serious reservations about *Thrown*. The book is generally well written. Howley is a fine prose stylist: her prose is intelligent, lively, striking. She offers us detailed portraits of two young men, MMA fighters, and the strange and fascinating world of the fight culture. The point of the narrative is that Howley is entranced, liberated, thrown from the confines of her too involuted self, by the spectacle of these young men inflicting and absorbing violent physical damage. That is okay. The book is a valuable look at a primal fact of humankind, the cathartic power of the spectacle of violence. That Howley celebrates, revels in this violence might be problematic to her parents, say, but is not to me. She is a space taker, a nicely empty word: synonyms would include groupie and sycophant. In exchange for hanging out with these two young men, spending countless hours with them, listening to them, bucking them up, watching muscle building documentaries and B movie comedies again and again, bolstering their egos, getting them energy bars, she is granted, at rare occasions, moments of ecstatic release in the course of witnessing their fighting. And while she has emotional attachments of a sort for both men, strictly speaking they are both instruments for her, solely of use to her for this courting of ecstasy that no one else (except us, now, the sympathetic reader) understands. What is problematic is her curt dismissal of all the rest of the world as pale, shallow, inauthentic, and essentially sold out, by its keeping a healthy distance from this violence, or misunderstanding it. She is, or was, a philosophy grad student, and every single person in academia is a bloodless bookworm who does not get the essential power of what she is undertaking. Beware of any author who is so certain of her vision and who, at the same time (and this is the problem) dismisses all the rest of the world as beneath her level of insight. One of her two fighters, Sean Huffman, has a child with an unbalanced, unhealthy young woman with whom he had a brief, otherwise meaningless fling. And to his credit, in my eyes, he goes to great lengths, within his limited means and in spite of the vicious money grubbing of the child's mother, to become a father, to care for his child, to provide. In doing so he commits a cardinal sin: he gets a job, which distracts from his power, his commitment as a fighter. And Howley drops him, cold. He has failed her, failed the higher mission of her search for ecstatic release. Oddly, I rather think she failed him, in not supporting this good man's desire for a deeper, just connection with his child. Just shows you what a shallow, bloodless sort of guy I am, I guess. This book is good; it is powerfully written, offering insight into a culture I knew very little about. This book is also fundamentally flawed, or I am. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Intriguing blend of fact and fiction -- funny and insightful

By LynxA perceptive inside look at the world of mixed martial arts from an open-minded outsider would have been enough for me to give this book five stars. Howley has added a whole other layer with a fictional narrator: the philosophy grad student who is supposedly researching and writing the book. The narrator, Kit, indeed pretentious and arrogant. A lot of the fun of the book is Howley sending up academic snoot while taking the fighters seriously. You don't need to know anything about philosophy (I don't) to enjoy this - and if you're reading on Kindle, you can always look up any words you don't know. Let me quote Howley herself on her intentions, I can't say it any better: "The material required a grander, perhaps antiquated voice distinct from the kind of self-deprecating gee whizz smallness I see in a lot of current nonfiction. A voice absurd in its pretensions and ambitions but, in its willingness to risk absurdity, able to touch on ideas as big as the Schopenhauerian sublime. Also, its supposed to be funny." She nailed it.

In this darkly funny work of literary nonfiction, a bookish young woman insinuates herself into the lives of two cage fighters: one a young prodigy, the other an aging journeyman. Acclaimed essayist Kerry Howley follows these men for three years through the bloody world of mixed martial arts as they starve themselves, break bones, fail their families and form new ones in the quest to rise from remote Midwestern fairgrounds to packed Vegas arenas. With penetrating intelligence and wry humor, Howley exposes the profundities and absurdities of this American subculture. Kerry Howley's work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *New York Times Magazine*, *the Atlantic*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Slate*, and frequently in *Bookforum*. She holds an MFA from the University of Iowa's Nonfiction Writing Program.

A *New York Times* Book, NPR, *Slate*, and *Time Magazine* best book of the year. It probably started with Homer. Writers ever since have been probing athletes for signifiers, for metaphor amped by grit under pressure. Now the erudite essayist Kerry Howley makes her full-length debut in this sweaty but honorable tradition. She endows it with sly humor, trenchant vision and a curious twist on our concepts of genre. . . . Howley depicts it all with piercing skill. . . . *Thrown* is compulsively readable, informative, hilarious. . . . It is also a ferocious dissection of the essence of the spectator. *New York Times* Book The most bizarre and fascinating book I've read this year. . . . The precision of Howley's prose reminds me of Joan Didion or David Foster Wallace: she's so involved with the fight, it's as if she were trying to eat it with words. Howley writes like someone whose been flayed, all nerve endings exposed, no barriers between her and the world around her. Lev Grossman, *Time* magazine "This sui generis debut threatens to remap the entire genre of nonfiction. . . . Howley's brilliant prose is as dexterous and doughty as the fighters she trails, torquing into philosophy, parody, and sweat-soaked poetry." *Publishers Weekly*, starred boxed review Three years in the lives of two Midwestern cage fighters as seen through the eyes of a neurotic academic. A poetic portrait of a bloody American subculture, and a knockout of a nonfiction debut. O, *The Oprah Magazine* Kerry Howley embarks on a quest for ecstasy

delivered in an unexpected forum: MMA fights. This transfixing nonfiction narrative combines bloody play-by-play with philosophical inquiry, delivering serious punches. Welcome to the Octagon. *Playboy* In her highly original memoir, *Thrown*, Howley follows two local fighters at very different points in their careers, from their training gyms in Iowa to big events in New Orleans, Las Vegas and New Jersey. Hilarious, sometimes tragic, and philosophical, Howley's first book is remarkably innovative and self-assured. It's a sly, unexpected and endlessly promising debut. *NPR.org* "Howley manages to conjure the moments that make fights so thrilling. And it is striking that she manages to do so in a book that is also a very funny satire of the ways in which elites including, famously, Norman Mailer often make a fetish of violence and the people who commit it. . . . as dark and funny as anything I have read this year." *Washington Post* A truly gripping account of the insular world of MMA: the history, the personalities, the injuries, the money, the white-hot fighters and the foundering ones. . . . Howley stepped into the cage and stepped out of it with something new and stunning." *Salon* Engrossing *Thrown* is a sympathetic book about people who might otherwise be written off as dirtbags. . . . an intimate, artful look at violence on the smallest scale. *Chicago Tribune* "In *Thrown*, a fresh, funny, and highly cerebral treatise on the philosophical merits of cage fighting, she challenges not only the stigma surrounding the sport but the conventions of literary nonfiction itself." *Boston Globe* An exciting brand of nonfiction depicting the darker side of the American dream. . . . Kerry Howley's