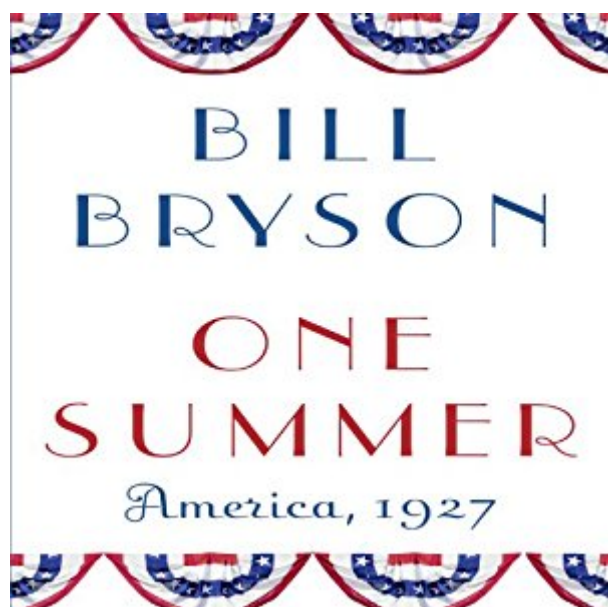


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# One Summer: America, 1927



## Synopsis

Audie Award Finalist, History, 2014 One of the most admired nonfiction writers of our time retells the story of one truly fabulous year in the life of his native country - a fascinating and gripping narrative featuring such outsized American heroes as Charles Lindbergh, Babe Ruth, and yes Herbert Hoover, and a gallery of criminals (Al Capone), eccentrics (Shipwreck Kelly), and close-mouthed politicians (Calvin Coolidge). It was the year Americans attempted and accomplished outsized things and came of age in a big, brawling manner. What a country. What a summer. And what a writer to bring it all so vividly alive for us in this certain best-seller.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Millions of words have been spent singing Bill Bryson's praises, so please allow me to add to them. His latest work of brilliant, comedic non-fiction, "One Summer: America, 1927," ranks among his greatest works. It's hard to think of a more insightful, more hilarious author working today. Bryson's thesis is simple - America in the summer of 1927 may not have realized it, but it was taking its first steps as a world leader - in economics, in the arts, in sports, and in technology. Some of these developments were good, while others were reprehensible. Bryson manages to find either the humanity or the hilarity in each development - sometimes finding both. Much of the book revolves around Charles Lindbergh's unimaginable feat of crossing the Atlantic in a plane. Today we don't think about Lindbergh much, but this event galvanized the world as no other event had previously done. Bryson writes at length about the other efforts to accomplish the same or similar feats and how many good men (and the occasional good woman) of several different countries died in the

attempt. Bryson also focuses on how Lindbergh coped with being the most famous and adored person alive . . . for a time (until his pro-eugenics/Nazi sympathies became public . . . sympathies that Bryson extensively observes were shared by several "leading" intellectuals of the day). Lindbergh remains the heart of this dizzying book. But by no means is Lindbergh the sole focus. Lindbergh's feat had tremendous economic consequences as it sparked the American aviation industry to unparalleled heights. Still, this was the summer of Henry Ford, who stopped work on the Model T in favor of the new Model A.

Bill Bryson is an author who makes history come to life. I have always enjoyed his work, and I ended up reading *One Summer* (400+ pages) in a little over a day. Like many of Bryson's other works, this book just captured my imagination from the opening page and held onto it throughout.=== *The Good Stuff* ===\* I had never really considered 1927 to be all that special a year, but this book made it seem to be one of the most interesting patches of American History. Bryson does a masterful job of interweaving Charles Lindbergh, Babe Ruth, the stock market, prohibition and a few other topics into a single narrative. In doing so, he points out a number of relationships that I sort of knew, just forgot to think about. For example, I was surprised to realize that Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic before soundtracks were added to pictures.\* The book is full of facts that I had never read before. I never knew that Zane Grey earned more than ten times the amount that F. Scott Fitzgerald ever made from writing, or that Grey led a life that would have shocked most of his fans. The book is full of such facts and observations, and I enjoyed reading them.\* Bryson captures a personal side to many of the people in his book. I had never appreciated how much of a social misfit Charles Lindbergh really was, and can only imagine the pain that years of being a A-list celebrity caused him. It seemed like the man couldn't brush his teeth without a parade and speeches. Similarly, it was amazing political scandals, Hollywood gossip and shady business dealings are as common in the 1920's as they are today.\* The book takes a broad view of topics, and manages to touch on just about everything that seemed important in either the 1920's or today.

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