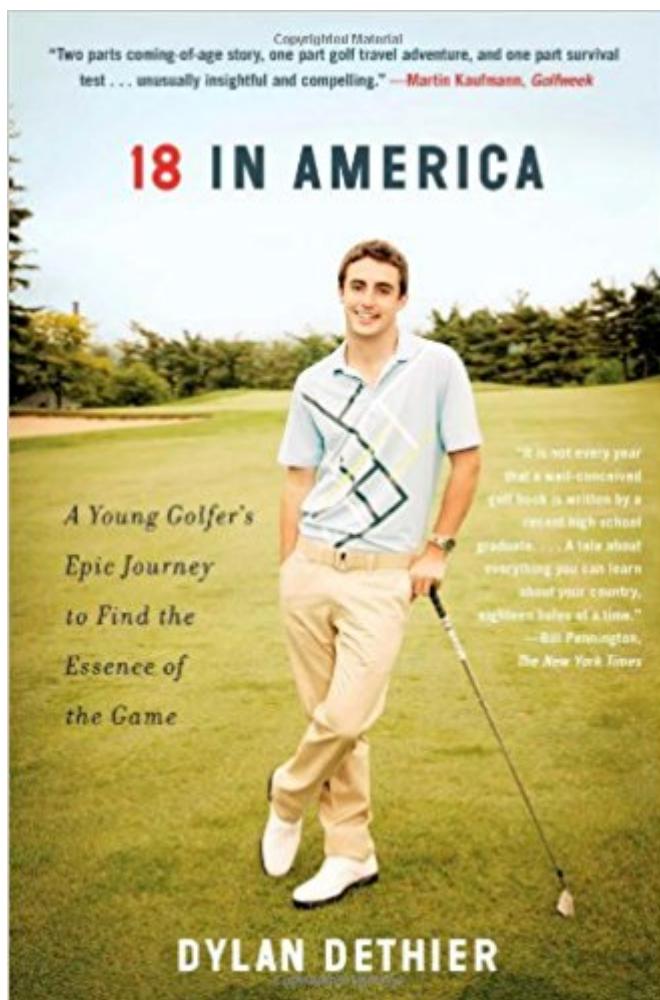


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18 In America: A Young Golfer's Epic Journey To Find The Essence Of The Game



Synopsis

A “winning” and “well-conceived” account of one teenager’s solo trek to play golf in each of the lower forty-eight states. “two parts coming-of-age story, one part golf travel adventure, and one part survival test.” Shortly before his freshman year of college was set to begin, seventeen-year-old Dylan Dethier, hungry for an adventure beyond his small town, deferred his admission and, like Jack Kerouac and Ken Kesey before him, packed his used car and meager life savings and set off to see and write about America (Yahoo). His goal: play a round of golf in each of the lower forty-eight states. From a gritty municipal course in Flint, Michigan, to rubbing elbows with Phil Mickelson at Quail Hollow, Dylan would spend a remarkable year exploring the astonishing variety of the nation’s golf courses and its people. Over one year, thirty-five thousand miles, and countless nights alone in his dusty Subaru, Dylan showered at truck stops, slept with an ax under his seat, and lost his virginity, traveling “wherever the road took him, with golf as a vehicle for understanding America.” The result is a book that “would be considered fine work by any writer, let alone one so young.”

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Customer Reviews

“I loved 18 in America and the connection I share with Dylan Dethier to both the game of golf and our country. Anybody who has swung a golf club can tell you that it’s more than a game -- it becomes a personal challenge that helps you discover yourself. Dylan writes about his adventures with wisdom beyond his years.” (Jason Dufner, two-time PGA Tour winner) “This

is a superb book about golf -- but it's also a superb book about growing up, fitting in, friendship, food and the great American road. I barely know a birdie from a bogie, but it didn't matter: I still devoured Dylan Dethier's memorable tale of innocence lost and wisdom won." (A.J. Jacobs, *New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Know-it-All* and *Drop Dead Healthy*) "18 in America is a golf adventure that will appeal to anyone who has ever played the great game. At its heart, though, it is the story of a young man growing into adulthood, taking chances, making mistakes, finding out what feels right and what feels wrong. I salute Dylan Dethier for stepping off the good school-good college-good job treadmill and taking a year to find out who he really is, for writing about his amazing trip with such honesty and insight, and for being willing to reveal his flaws as openly as he revels in his triumphs. It is rare to find a book -- especially a golf book, especially a debut written by someone so young -- that smoothly blends pure fun and astute life lessons. 18 in America will inspire golfers and adventurers both young and old. I enjoyed every page." (Roland Merullo, author of *Golfing with God* and regular contributor to *Golf World* magazine) "An enterprising and inspirational golf journey unlike any other." (Jim Nantz, *CBS Sports*) "Whether showering in truck stops, meeting Phil Mickelson and Michael Jordan, or playing at Sawgrass and Pebble Beach, the simple story of 18 in America is filled with youthful enthusiasm, honest and sincere. It's a lovely road story well told. Discover a young golf Kerouac on the road, teeing off all across America and loving it." (Tom Lavoie *Shelf Awareness*) "His trip was not just about par, birdies and bogeys." Dethier is not from the country club world of golf. (Bob Minzesheimer *USA Today*) "Much more of a coming-of-age experience." In addition to opening up a Berkshires boy to a bigger world, teaching him how to cope with new and sometimes difficult situations and giving him perspective on golf's place in American life, the 35,000-mile journey in his dusty Subaru definitely helped Dethier grow up fast. "this guy can really write." (Berkshire Eagle) "Two parts coming-of-age story, one part golf travel adventure and one part survival test. The result, 18 in America, is the work of a young man who not only is unusually insightful and self-aware, but has the writerly gifts and clear voice to tell his story. In a year that is shaping up to be an unusually good one for golf literature, it's unlikely that the genre is going to produce anything as compelling as Dethier's tale." (Martin Kaufmann *Golfweek* magazine) "A great coming of age tale based around the most epic of golf trips. A quick and easy read that does not disappoint." (The Itinerant Golfer) "I couldn't put it down. The writing is vivid. You can see the people, imagine the places and understand a young man's moments of loneliness and fear then on the next page laugh at his sense of humor. You'd think this was his 20th book, not his initial effort. I seldom

read a book in two days, but I devoured Dethier's superb 256-page effort. (Richard Lord Berkshire Eagle)"It is not every year that a well-conceived golf book is written by a recent high school graduate... Sleeping in his car, showering at truck stops and raiding free motel breakfast buffets, Dethier played wherever the road took him, with golf as a vehicle for understanding America. He played with autoworkers and livestock auctioneers, and his 32,000-mile trek became a tale about everything you can learn about your country 18 holes at a time. It was a journey that was much more than a golf trip." (Bill Pennington New York Times)"Intriguing... more than his share of unpredictable episodes that make for good reading." (Salt Lake Tribune)"Two things will piss you off about this book. First of all, Dethier is a better golfer than you or me. Second of all, he is a better writer than you or me." (Sportschump.net)"This would be considered fine work by any writer, let alone one so young." (The Maine Edge)"[A] winning memoir, which transcends golf's elitist image, exposing the generous, diverse, and contradictory soul of the game and of America itself." (Parade magazine)"Like Jack Kerouac and Ken Kesey and a host of others before him, Dethier packed his used car and his meager life savings, and set off to see and write about America.... Encounters with hustlers and thieves aside, what resonates in "18 in America" is Dethier's optimism, and his talent for perceiving and telling of the good in things, be they golf or people." (ABC News/Yahoo)"A terrific read." (Tim Layden, senior editor, Sports Illustrated)"It's not the brushes with greatness (including caddying in a pro-am with Phil Mickelson) but the goodness of ordinary people that make his journey so memorable--for him and for us." (In Play magazine)

Dylan Dethier is a native of small-town western Massachusetts. He learned to golf on a shoes-optional par-30 course near his grandparents' house on the Maine coast. Dethier is now an English major at Williams College.

I picked up this book expecting a pleasant account of a young dude's road trip, with some funny encounters, an obstacle here and there, and great golf stories. I got all those, but 18 In America delivered so much more. Far from a "what-I-did-last-summer" rehash, the book comes through with vivid characters and captivating anecdotes. It is at once a page-turner and a high-quality piece of writing. Dethier lays down the ink with a consistent and confident voice that eludes most first-time authors and hits us with original observations on golf, growing up, and Americans. It's like Travels with Charley written by a young Bill Bryson. These stories are uniquely funny and entertaining, but

also brutally honest and deeply personal. The openness sucks you in from the start and the wit, originality, and excellent prose keeps you there. Before you know it, Dylan is wrapping up a legendary road trip and leaving you wanting more. Impressive from start to finish, I highly recommend 18 in America.

This book is one of the best I've read in several years. Dylan Dethier weaves a storyline that gives the reader a chance to experience his trip around the country playing golf for themselves. You needn't be a golfer to enjoy it, though. It's the kind of book that will satisfy anyone, and allow them to see this amazing journey through the author's eyes. Dethier writes with the clarity, intuition, and wisdom of someone twice his age, and his ability to see and convey the irony in any situation is truly unparalleled...and his wry humor is hilarious and well-placed. Eighteen in America is an absolute must-read for teens experiencing their own coming-of-age, too.

For anyone who has ever been 18 or ever taken a road trip or played golf or known anyone who plays golf, or been a parent, 18 in America is truly a gift. Dylan somehow takes the reader along on his journey, making us ache for his loneliness and fear for his encounters one minute - and envy his freedom to wake up to incredible landscapes and experience the kindness of people from all walks of life the next. Dylan has an uncanny way of describing the people he meets and weaving their stories into the story of his journey. His love of the game is contagious, and his hopefulness and encouragement for each of us to follow our dreams keeps us turning the pages.

Although I was expecting a self-absorbed, pedantic, clumsily written account of a well-heeled, sheltered young kid's golf-focused road trip, I was surprised and delighted to find instead an engaging, closely observed travelogue by an increasingly self-aware and thoughtful young man. Somewhat awkward both in style and substance at the outset, both the author and the book grow in awareness, insight and maturity along the way. He gains perspective on himself, other people, golf and life itself. While not an avid golfer myself, I was able to follow and enjoy that part of the story, though it is certainly not necessary to understand terminology to gain a sense of what this quirky kid is seeking. Though he sets out to play at least one game of golf in each continental U.S. state, the objective he achieves is much more far-reaching and I suspect there will be many adults readers who will be jealous of both his adventures and his freedom. I salute the young Huck Finn of the golfing world, now a budding writer at Williams College. I hope he continues to explore and describe what he encounters in the world.

I have worked with teens as a pastor, teacher and coach for thirty years and I have always encouraged my students to dare to dream because dreams do come true. So many of our youth are bored and lack a sense of adventure but this story is different. It took courage for Dylan Dethier to choose to go against the norm by taking a year off before going to college to feed his passion for golf by playing at least one round of golf in each of the "lower 48" states. He lets the reader ride along with him through each round and experience. I enjoyed this book very much and I must say that I was quite envious of Dylan as he lived out something that I have been dreaming about for years. I finished Dylan's story in two days and when I finished this book I took out my road atlas and started planning out my own golf adventure. It does not matter if you are a golfer or not, I encourage you to read this book and learn to dream again. Thank you Dylan for sharing this amazing story.

Being an avid golfer that has played many golf courses around the United States and elsewhere, I really enjoyed the read and was envious of Dylan's journey or at least most of it. There were a few experiences I would not mind skipping. I grew up playing the cheap municipals and had a similar attitude toward the country club crowd that Dylan describes. Over the years I have had the opportunity to play at some of the high end courses, though not on the scale Dylan did, and found that golf is universal with some great folks at every level. So Dylan's story resonated with my own golf journey even though mine has been over a period of 40+ years and not all crammed into one year. The book is extremely well written and an easy read without focusing entirely on the golf, so anyone can enjoy it.

When I heard some kid wrote a book about playing golf in every state, I was not particularly impressed. It's not like he climbed Everest, walked the , or even cut his arm off. But being a casual golfer and a sucker for any story that may inspire me to quit my desk job and go on an adventure, I gave the book a chance and I'm glad I did. The beginning was ok, but the second half is when I was actually unable to put this book down. There are ups and downs, challenges and vices, and the author provides a fresh insight into all that he experiences along the way. While I'll probably continue sitting at my desk job, I think this book could inspire more people to break the mold and embark on their own adventures. I'd highly recommend it to anybody.

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