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Autore	Smith Jacob <1970->
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Sommario/riassunto	Well before Evel Knievel or Hollywood stuntmen, reality television or the X Games, North America had a long tradition of stunt performance, of men (and some women) who sought media attention and popular fame with public feats of daring. Many of these feats-jumping off bridges, climbing steeples and buildings, swimming incredible distances, or doing tricks with wild animals-had their basis in the manual trades or in older entertainments like the circus. In The Thrill Makers, Jacob Smith shows how turn-of-the-century bridge jumpers, human flies, lion tamers, and stunt pilots first drew crowds to their spectacular displays of death-defying action before becoming a crucial, yet often invisible, component of Hollywood film stardom. Smith explains how these working-class stunt performers helped shape definitions of American manhood, and pioneered a form of modern media celebrity that now occupies an increasingly prominent place in our contemporary popular culture.

