



# Road Fever

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## Road Fever Tim Cahill

Tim Cahill reports on the road trip to end all road trips: a journey that took him from Tierra del Fuego to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, in a record-breaking twenty three and a half days.

## Road Fever Details

Date : Published March 3rd 1992 by Vintage (first published 1991)

ISBN : 9780394758374

Author : Tim Cahill

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Travel, Nonfiction, Adventure, Autobiography, Memoir, Humor



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# From Reader Review Road Fever for online ebook

## Sarah says

Only 2\* because I admit I didn't finish this one... It was a digital library download that got recalled before I got too deep into it. I was still in the "preparation" phase of the trip and it just wasn't keeping my interest. Will try another by this author, though.

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## Anne Marie says

I thought this book would be a travelogue about traveling from Ushuaia, South America, to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. Like, in depth information about these places.

It's not in depth information about these places. I was a little disappointed at first.

The book is about two guys trying to set a Guinness Book of World Record by traveling, via truck and road, the least amount of days from Ushuaia to Prudhoe Bay. I didn't realize that from the book description until I started reading the (e)book. How in depth can you get with that time frame?

Not much. I was not so happy when the first 100 pages focused on researching how to verify a world record, how to procure the truck (from General Motors in this case), how to get love letters from embassy officials so that you could cross borders, and how to basically survive what amounts to living with a roommate over the course of almost a month in the proximity of an SUV. Oh, and all those sketchy border check points along the way.

But this guy - Cahill? He can write.

I'm giving it four stars (but it's five stars worth of quality writing) only because, despite 300 pages of text, he didn't write enough. You basically feel like you're in the truck with these guys as you drive through thirteen countries. No, he doesn't give you every detail. But he gives you more than enough to whet your curiosity and start planning your own road adventure.

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## Erin says

What a road trip! So much of what Tim Cahill describes involves the preparation -- the paperwork, logistics, and financial backing -- that must be figured out before starting a marathon trip such as the one General Motors bankrolled. I understand he was trying to make a point, but I would've enjoyed the book a bit more had he told more stories like this one, which happened while he and his driving partner were driving through Ecuador:

"If we were to be captured by terrorists anywhere, Ecuador was the place. The previous month, during a wildly vitriolic campaign for president, one candidate, Abdala Bucaram ... claimed that he had been abducted secretly, and he told no one of the kidnapping. The videotape released by his opponents, Bucaram said, had been filmed during his captivity. He had been forced, at gunpoint, to have sex with the three women in the

video. The evil terrorists who had subjected him to this appalling torture intended to destroy his campaign. And, okay, sure, he appeared to enjoy it, but you had to understand, his life was at stake."

Who wants to hear about stamps and paperwork when there are sex stories about corrupt Central and South American politicians to be told?!

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### **Brian says**

I've read this about once a year since it was published. I used to give it a five star rating, and it wouldn't be right to give it three, but it's getting a bit dated now. Conditions have changed in every country on the trip, dictatorships have come and gone, but the humor is still fresh. I consider it less an exciting travelogue and more a humorous historical odyssey.

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### **Michael says**

Tim Cahill is part of a two-man team who set the land-speed record from Tierra Del Fuego to the northern coast of Alaska. This book is absolutely fascinating, a view into a kind of travel that even those who are devoted to seeking out exotic locales almost certainly never get near.

The trip itself is only part of the book: Cahill also chronicles preparations and tangents, and devotes a considerable amount of space to the tensions involved in stuffing two guys in a car together for 25 days straight.

It's a compelling read, very narrative and not at all dry. Even if you ordinarily stick to fiction, you won't find this one a chore. I absolutely recommend it for anyone interested in travel in general, Latin America, or just unusual experiences. My one reservation is that it's now somewhat dated.

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### **Katherine Cuevas says**

The great book called Road Fever by Tim Cahill is about a trip in the American continent. All the chapters in the book describe different situations that happened through the trip that started in Argentina. Tim, the author and the protagonist, narrates his experience of being a foreign in Latin countries and the difficulties of traveling in a truck with his partner. Road Fever presents multiple examples of rhetorical appeals. Firstly, rhetorical appeals are logos, pathos, and ethos. Those rhetorical appeals have the function of using the language or words to effectively persuade the audience. Therefore, the following paragraphs show three examples of logos, pathos, and ethos, and also the effect on the audience or reader.

At the beginning of the book, most of the agreements and requirements about the trip were presented. Tim did accept the contract with the company, and he clearly stated that "[he] would not endorse or participate in advertising the truck... [but] if the truck fell apart on the record run, [he is] free to write about it" (Cahill 10). Because Tim gave a reason for when he could write about the characteristics of the truck, the reader can understand that the contract did not say that he could or could not talk about the truck. Therefore, Tim's reason appeals to logos because the audience believes or understands it. In others words, all the logical arguments appeal to logos by making the reader to comprehend. The appeal was effective because I, as the

audience or reader of this book, understood Tim's argument to write about the features or the result of the truck in the trip.

The rhetorical appeal called pathos make a different effect in the audience than logos' effect. Words that get the audience's feelings appeal to pathos. The effect on the reader is that he/she can feel an emotion. When Tim said to himself that "Most anytime I leave home, however, the weather turns spitefully glorious...why the hell I would ever want to leave", he shows that he is not happy with this situation (Cahill 74).

Consequently, the words that Tim said about his home town make the reader feel sorrow for him. By reading it, I feel depressed and melancholy because Tim loves his house and the weather there, but he cannot be there all the time that he wants. Therefore, the appeal was truly effective because the audience feel a sentiment by Tim's words and phrases about his suffering of not being in home.

For some people, the faith in God is really important because it completes their lives. For Tim too, he considered a huge part of his beliefs and decisions. One time he said that "You get your inspiration where it falls, and for my part, Michael Morgan's faith is inspirational" (Cahill 125). By saying this words he is being sincere about what he thinks is inspirational for him that in this case is the father's faith in God. Therefore, the sincerity of Tim appeals to ethos because the audience can trust the author. I can believe his words because he demonstrates sincerity and honesty when he tells something about his personal life or his job in the trip. The appeal was effective because the reader did trust Tim as the author and the main character of the book.

The three rhetorical appeals that were presented in the paragraphs below demonstrate ways to persuade the reader by the author or characters' words. Logos is author's arguments that the reader would understand. Pathos is characters' words that would make the audience feel a sentiment. Ethos is how the reader can believe the author or character, and some of the ways is by the sincerity. Therefore, Road Fever shows logos, pathos, and ethos by Tim words and explanations of the trip from Argentina to Alaska. In conclusion, all reasons, emotions, and sincerity are ways to persuade and make the audience trust and believe in Tim Cahill and his book, Road Fever.

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### **Kristopher says**

This book is barely readable. The author takes what could be a great concept and destroys it with droning.

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### **Jennifer says**

I am a person that loves travel memoirs. I always find that they drive me to keep pursuing and working to achieve my goals of seeing the world. This book was fun mostly because at the time he traveled from Tierra del Fuego to Prudhoe Bay in record time.

At the time this was amazing and that is why I love this book. Going on an adventure like this was not the norm.

Very well written book. I laughed so much in this book. Anyone that has ever traveled will understand the perils he went through because they still exist today, so a great relaxing book to read!

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## Marvin says

Tim Cahill has long been my favorite travel writer from his stint with Rolling Stone to his articles in Outside. Some of his best essays are collected in his strange titled books of his trilogy, being *Jaguars Ripped My Flesh*, *A Wolverine is Eating my Leg*, *Pegged to Death by Ducks*. Cahill is sort of a cross between Hunter S. Thompson and Paul Theroux with a taste of Dave Barry thrown in for laughs. However *Road Fever* is not an essay collection but a memoir of his record breaking drive on the Pan-American Highway from Terra De Fuego, Argentina to Pruhoe Bay in Alaska in 1987. One of Cahill's strength is that he can find humor in anything. But he is also good at transmitting his and the other driver's apprehension and fears in what was some of the most dangerous parts of the world in the 80s. Cahill effectively account their obstacles in completing their run ranging from horrendous bureaucratic BS (still there) to bribe-obsessed government officials (definitely still there) to constantly feared bandits and terrorists (significantly reduced). I also enjoyed the first third of the book which focused on preparation. Hint to further adventure. This is a very good travel book and a nice one to read if you are not familiar with Tim Cahill and his quirky style of riding.

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## Rex Fuller says

Two guys drive from Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, in a 1-ton GMC Sierra pickup, 15,000 and some miles, in 23 days, 22 hours, and 43 minutes. One of them, Tim Cahill, puts you in the cab for the moments of seething tension, giggle fits, crushing despair, and blinding joy inherent in any long road trip, magnified logarithmically by this distance and speed, and the dizzying bureaucracy of getting the truck and the people through customs, immigration, and police checkpoints in (!) eleven Latin American countries. In fact, they came to feel they were not so much drivers as "documenteros," document bearers. This is good enough to read twice.

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## David says

Overall, a good read. I loved the whole idea of a road trip from the southernmost road to the northernmost road in the Americas. The fact it was done in 1987, when cell phones were hardly an option and people like Noriega were in power, also makes it interesting. Cahill's writing is pretty good. My only two complaints were (1) the pacing of having the trip begin at the midpoint of the book, and limiting basically all of North America to the final 10% of the book (it's obvious that after the drivers' perpetually paranoid trek through South America anticipating Mad Max gangs that there was just nothing to say in the comfortable countries.), and (2) Cahill himself. What is it with travel writers like Bill Bryson and Tim Cahill who not only have to act like immature jerks, but think it's something worth noting in their books? Cahill is no Bryson in terms of material, but that aside - that's one heck of a road trip!

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## Dustin says

I have wanted to read this for quite some time, but have been a little weary. The thing is, I love Tim Cahill, but all of his writing is short-form journalism style. I was worried that a longer narrative would lose its luster

for me and Cahill would drop in my standings. Not at all. The book was delightful. Mostly because of the detail he describes of what it takes to be an adventure writer. As for the adventure itself, the book is truly exciting, with vivid detail of the gorgeous landscapes he traversed and interesting people he met. The book focuses almost exclusively on getting through South and Central America, but that is where all the fun happens. US and Canada took them just a few days, and he devoted about 20 pages to it. A really fun book, and a must-read for anyone harboring plans to take on this type of profession/adventure.

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### **Deb says**

This is pure travel literature candy. I have an affection for adventure travel stories in which travelers pursue risky goals and endure challenging conditions. Written in the late 80s, the book chronicles the pursuit of the World's Record for shortest time to drive from the southern most tip of Argentina to the end of the road in Alaska. Cahill's language brings to life the absurdity of their pursuit, along with the humor and challenges of racing on dangerous roads and enduring paperwork shuffles at every border crossing.

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### **David says**

I grabbed this book from the Peace Corps library in San Jose, and it is an okay travel narrative full of some standard adventures. And that is pretty much my problem with the book, its a by the numbers adventure for Americans. I also found the author's descriptions of the towns and countries they drove by to be oddly detailed and informed considering how quickly they were racing by everything. Also annoying is Cahill's personality, he seems like an annoying know-it-all you might meet at a party, but the kind who exaggerates or might often be wrong. His grasp of Latin American history (Evita Peron wasn't president or even alive in the 1970's) and politics (he likes to pretend every country is full of Mad Max style gangs) is poor, yet he writes like he has total mastery of the subject. Still, towards the end I couldn't help but get caught up in their race to the finish.

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### **Marcus says**

Tim Cahill's writing and humor really make this tale of his trip from Ushuaia to Prudhoe Bay a great story. His sense of humor is great--I found myself laughing out loud over and over though the book. The writing is clever and insightful. In a book that is composed almost entirely of descriptions, it never feels forced or boring. Cahill masterfully weaves in insightful and compelling mini-tours through the socio-political situation in the various countries that really add to the story. They were some of my favorite parts of the book.

There were a few times where the collision of world events and their arrival on the scene seem to happen, very improbably, at just the right moment. They were probably exaggerated for the sake of the story, but it was fine. It worked. Their trip wasn't extremely eventful but it had enough excitement to be really enjoyable.

The only downer for me was that while there were a few very real human moments in the story, Tim and his professional driving companion Garry Sowerby seemed to be at odds with each other more than not. Garry is, or at least is portrayed as, a very good driver, but moody, stressed out and generally not someone that you'd want to spend every hour of 24 days with socially. They lacked 'chemistry.' Even so, the story was

wonderful and makes me want to hop in a new FJ Cruiser (not the GMC Sierra they drove) and give it a go myself.

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Page 127 - The drive begins. The first 126 pages describe preparations for the trip.

Page 261 - They cross the Mexican border into the US.

Page 267 - They cross into Canada.

Page 277 - End of book.

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