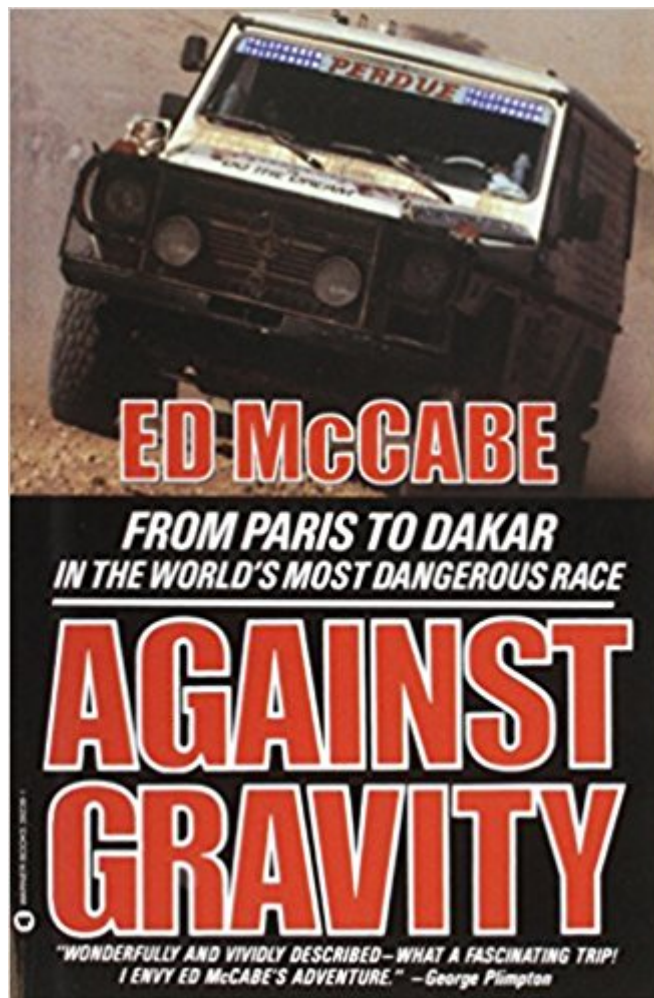




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# Against Gravity



## Synopsis

For all armchair adventurers, *Against Gravity* is the compelling story of a highly successful advertising executive who left Madison Avenue to race his car in the deadly 8,000-mile Paris-Dakar rally.

## Book Information

Paperback: 308 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing (April 1, 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0446392391

ISBN-13: 978-0446392396

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #956,047 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > Air Sports & Recreation #344 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Automotive > Racing #8623 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation

## Customer Reviews

Readers would be well advised to skip the first 150 pages of this overstuffed tome in which retired ad executive McCabe details the seemingly interminable preparations he and his then-fiancee, Carolyn, a fashion photographer, made to participate in the Paris/Dakar Rallye, an 8000-mile car race. His account of the race itself, however, on a course that covers portions of Africa's most rugged terrain, is exciting. Most haunting are McCabe's observations of the confounding poverty of Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal; he notes, but does not stress, the irony of driving \$90,000 automobiles through villages on the edge of starvation. Anticlimax ensues when McCabe is disqualified from the race for running out of gas. In all, his chronicle is probably best suited to the short span of a magazine article. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

New Year's Day in Paris marks the commencement of the Paris/Dakar Rallye, a grueling, dangerous motor race covering more than 8000 miles of African desert. When burned-out ad executive McCabe's girlfriend Carolyn wistfully reveals her dream of someday competing in the Rallye, the two begin a long, tortuous journey of frenzied preparations and painful self-revelation.

Calling upon his auto racing experience as a youngster and his extensive contacts in the ad world, McCabe methodically procures their astronomical budget while Carolyn embarks on a crash course in navigation. The pair become accepted as serious competitors by race officials, mechanics, fellow drivers, and--perhaps most importantly--by themselves. Recommended not only as an addition to sports collections but as a testament to human will and achievement.- Mark Annichiarico, "Library Journal"Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Other reviewers have panned this book because they don't like the author's personality ; they note [correctly] that he appears to be self centered and arrogant. Well, this is probably true. BUT, have they not noticed that most "successful" people are the same? It takes an inordinate self confidence [ofttimes perceived as arrogance] and tremendous drive / "goal orientation" [selfishness] TO become as successful as the author was/is. It also takes a tremendous focus to compete in the Dakar, especially for an American. Numerous roadblocks are thrown up specifically to keep us out of the contest. Be that as it may, I would recommend the book to anyone interested in distance rallying, as a real, not sponsor driven diatribe, look at what it takes to compete, even at the low level of McCabe. C'est formidable... Against Gravity chronicles the preparation and training necessary to just survive the event. I found it very interesting. As well as depressing - if it takes that kind of money just to mount a shoestring lower car-class effort, I'll never get to go! Of course, the costs have gone up 10 fold now, and the adventure is down by the same amount. They don't even run the race in Africa anymore. But, this is still an interesting look into a privateers effort to compete. I wish more, lots more, photos had been included, I mean the co-driver was a photographer for goodness sakes. And I would have liked to see a little more detail as well as more "colour coverage" of the race itself, but still an enjoyable read for the Dakar enthusiast.

Terrific book for those about to race, be it Budapest - Bamako or Mongol Rally - or a more profesional raid it give a very good idea of what things were like back when the Geländewagen were almost new - a vehicle probarbly well in reach for many today.

The book arrived ahead of deadline and in good condition, as advertised.

I ran into this book in the bargain bin of a bookstore that no longer exists in around 1992. The thing that caught my eye was the picture of Edward McCabe sitting on the sand eating something, complete with four day stubble. Then I saw the book was reviewed by OJ Simpson who was two

years away from the White Bronco. So I picked it up and started reading. I loved the first page and bought it for probably \$2 or so. (In 2014 Dollars, this might buy a battleship...) Even though most reviewers are right about McCabe's arrogance, you should remember this was 1991 and that sort of thing was not as frowned upon as it is now. It reads like he wrote it in chunks of about 20 pages without rereading what he had done the week before. But the truth is, I have thought about this single book more than almost any other except maybe the Bible, Crime and Punishment and Tale of Two Cities. The thought that a sheer act of will and perceived madness could propel me to such adventure has always haunted me. I am glad in this respect that I read this when I did not know much and had no real palate for good writing. One thing I have taken from this book is from OJ's review of the book and it flies in the face of much of McCabe's criticism in these reviews: If everyone in American Business had the guts and drive that Edward McCabe had, we would retake our position of leadership in the world. Certainly the skinny pants wearing crowd wouldn't create much (besides latte foam art) and for this reason, you should ignore almost everything written about this book and buy it. Read it with an open mind. Remember that it was written in long-past century when it was OK for men to excel and it was widely known that you had to take risks and do more than get out of bed to succeed.

The other reviews hit a number of good points, but I needed to get mine in. There are a number of reasons to read this book. None of them overwhelming, except for getting ready for the Dakar race. It tells about getting ready for the race, but not thoroughly. The concept of the mid life crisis is dealt with (though he and I dislike the term). He is self centered going in and self centered coming out. He is to some degree a bastard, but he knows it. I like the guy, but I wouldn't want my sister around him! The book is about life, challenges and getting your ass kicked. Sometimes things like this are a must do when they present themselves. You don't really enjoy it as fun, but there will always be a special smile inside you when the images creep back into your consciousness. This guy hit one of those moments. Don't get this new but you will enjoy the diversion for a few hours.

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