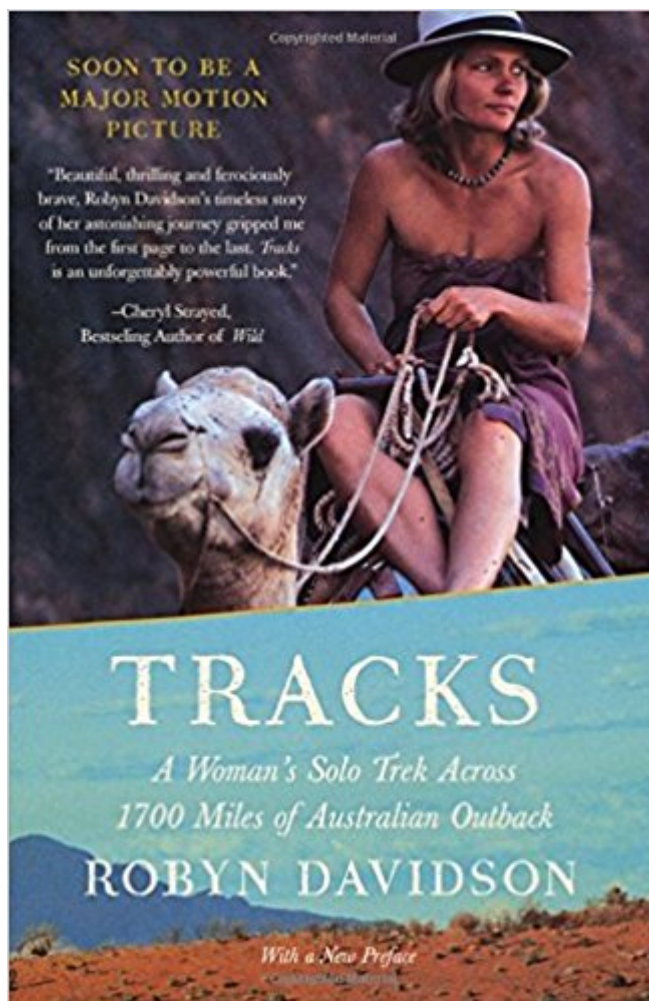


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# Tracks: A Woman's Solo Trek Across 1700 Miles Of Australian Outback



## Synopsis

NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE Robyn Davidson's opens the memoir of her perilous journey across 1,700 miles of hostile Australian desert to the sea with only four camels and a dog for company with the following words: "I experienced that sinking feeling you get when you know you have conned yourself into doing something difficult and there's no going back." Enduring sweltering heat, fending off poisonous snakes and lecherous men, chasing her camels when they get skittish and nursing them when they are injured, Davidson emerges as an extraordinarily courageous heroine driven by a love of Australia's landscape, an empathy for its indigenous people, and a willingness to cast away the trappings of her former identity. Tracks is the compelling, candid story of her odyssey of discovery and transformation. "An unforgettably powerful book." •Cheryl Strayed, author of Wild Now with a new postscript by Robyn Davidson.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Why does Robyn Davidson walk 1,700 miles across the Australian desert accompanied by four camels? Tracks is a quintessential adventure, yet the adventurer's relationship to her own quest is ambivalent and nuanced. She never directly explains her motivations, but it's clear that she's been driven to the starkness and isolation of the desert by something so personally powerful that she may not understand it herself. Ironically, when she accepts the financial backing of the National Geographic, her private "trial by fire" is doused by the popular concept of romantic independence she represents to others: "I was beginning to see it as a story for other people, with a beginning and

an ending." She feels pursued and invaded by the photographer assigned to follow her, by the people who intercept her with questions and interpretations. Yet her ultimate confrontations are with her own rage and desperation, with the personal and cultural repercussions of racism and misogyny in her own experience, and with the paradoxical ugliness and beauty of the rural Australia she encounters. The integrity of this articulate and impassioned account is evident in the fact that Robyn Davidson does not find glib solutions to inner or outer conflicts. Like her camel companions, she seems temperamental, insatiable, and slightly crazy, but also determined, direct, vulnerable, and splendid.

A cult classic with an ever-growing audience, *Tracks* is the brilliantly written and frequently hilarious account of a young woman's odyssey through the deserts of Australia, with no one but her dog and four camels as companions. Davidson emerges as a heroine who combines extraordinary courage with exquisite sensitivity. 16 pages of photos.

This truly enjoyable and fascinating story has been brought to my attention through the waves of promotion generated by the film--upcoming or already available, I am not sure. Regardless, I am glad it somehow sifted out. It is different, a well-written tale of a brief but unusual episode of a woman's life. I think, actually, that it was the camels that hooked me in. Then there is the romance of an Australia I have never seen, and never will see--it's changed now. There's also the nostalgia for the era of time. Altogether, it was good.

Robin Davidson wrote her story for those of us who are still "too afraid or feel too "old" to make our own journey of self-discovery. Thank you Robyn for letting us join you and your wonderful camels and your very special dog as you made your way across the beautifully described land of the Aboriginal people.

This is an incredibly interesting, thought provoking read which takes the reader beyond the journey described and into the recesses of the of the travelers' thoughts as she treks across the vastness of the Australia. As the story unwinds one can almost feel they have joined the author on her quest.

A true journey with the author! I'd read it again. She captured a time in her life that we can all relate to and travel, vicariously with her, to feel the power of the knowledge she gained and the truth in the understanding of what really matters in life for each of us is different, yet very much the same.

This is the amazing tale of a woman who decided to trek across Western Australia, from Alice Springs to the Indian Ocean. A large fraction of the book deals with the challenges she faced in Alice Springs, learning to train camels and developing the equipment and skills she would need. Her major problems were not the camels but the people with whom she had to deal, some of whom were ready to take advantage of her in any way they could. Her efforts to relate to the native people were often frustrated by the terrible ways these people had been treated, but a few of the older people were very helpful. She mostly travelled along the "tracks," dirt jeep trails which might see only a few vehicles per year. Many of the vehicles she met along these tracks contained people she would just as soon have missed. A great deal of this book deals with the mental anguish she felt at the disrespect of people for the natives and the land. I would have liked to read a bit more about the land and the wildlife - for example there was almost no mention of kangaroos or emus. This account brings us back to an era when we didn't all have GPS's and satellite maps, an era when a person was a bit more on their own than today.

Knowing nothing about camels she goes to Alice Springs to learn how to handle them and journey alone to the West coast of Australia. Her bonding with her camels is heart warming. The difficulties in just learning about them, how to make the gear on a shoe string, dealing with the harsh treatment she receives on that learning curve are just the start of her greater learning in the challenges of the desert- just the beginning of what she overcomes. Her connection with the Aboriginal people, their help and wisdom just another small part of this many faceted story.

I think this was written maybe 20 years ago, but it has experienced a resurgence of interest. The writing wasn't the most polished, however, the story was priceless, and the author's candidness made this a real treat. They play up the romance a little too much, really this was a story about an individual path to discovery...

Upon seeing the movie, I immediately downloaded the book. An initial impression of the book: From the movie, she didn't seem smart enough to be such a good writer. Continuing the book, I soon concluded though that nobody could possibly write so vividly without having actually lived it. This is not the kind of book that I normally read, but it turned out to be certainly one of the most enjoyable. The movie & the book are so different that I can't compare them. The movie is about what she did, while the book is about what was going on in her head.

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