



## Things I've Said, But Probably Shouldn't Have: An Unrepentant Memoir

By Bruce Dern, Robert Crane

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Bruce Dern has worked with practically every iconic actor and director in the last fifty years, and he's not afraid to say what he thinks about all of them. His career has run the gamut from B movies to Z movies to becoming an Oscar nominee, and he's created some of the most indelible performances in modern cinema. Now, in this uniquely funny memoir, he looks back over his amazing career, telling one memorable story after another and giving key insights into how placing artistic challenge over career development has kept one of Hollywood's greatest actors from also being one of its most rich and famous.

People love reading about red carpet regulars, and Dern doesn't disappoint. He writes candidly and unforgettably about working with Alfred Hitchcock, John Frankenheimer, Claude Chabrol, Jack Nicholson, Paul Newman, Bob Dylan, Matt Damon, Charlize Theron, Jane Fonda, John Wayne, and many more. Readers will discover why he turned down potentially career-making roles in *The Godfather*, *Marathon Man*, and *Gandhi*; why his prestigious family disowned him over a typo in the *New York Times*; and why, after he was already famous, he agreed to star in *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant*, the second best two-headed transplant movie of 1971.

As Dern's career moves full steam ahead in the HBO series *Big Love* and *Astronaut Farmer* (his forthcoming film with Bruce Willis and Billy Bob Thornton), *Things I've Said, but Probably Shouldn't Have* is the book not just Dern fans and Hollywood enthusiasts will be talking about this season.

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## **Things I've Said, But Probably Shouldn't Have: An Unrepentant Memoir** By Bruce Dern, Robert Crane Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Dern, who got his acting break in Roger Corman films, is best known for roles in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* and the Oscar-nominated *Coming Home*. While he's been an actor for decades, his rambling career account suffers from inaccuracy; for example, when Dern wrongly identifies Elia Kazan as Jewish (he was brought up Catholic). Born a Midwest child of privilege, Dern learned the Method with Lee Strasberg, who suggested he go to Hollywood. And from the moment he gets there, he trumpets his own abilities. His memoir details his fellow actors, directors and pictures, and reveals that he turned down an audition for *The Godfather* and rebuffed Woody Allen. While briefly touching on his marriages and his obsession with running, Dern saves his eloquence for the magic that can occur on a set. He reserves high praise for directors like Hitchcock, because "we might do something nobody had ever done before." Despite his wild run, his memoir is so dominated by ego, it fails to hold our interest.

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From [Booklist](#)

Sturdy second- and occasionally first-line actor Dern comes clean about his life and career in a memoir that required two as-told-to scribes to whip into shape (it still reads like recording transcripts, bumpy but personal). Dern hailed from Glencoe on Chicago's swanky North Shore, where his family occupied one of three contiguous estates owned by the founders of the Carson Pirie Scott department stores (an older cousin was poet and Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish). After high school, he decamped for New York and Lee Strasberg's notorious Actors Studio. Directed early on by Elia Kazan on stage, Dern proceeded to a torrent of TV and film work, most notably including cult favorites *The Wild Angels* and *Silent Running* as well as *Coming Home*, which got him a supporting actor Oscar nomination. He costarred in Hitchcock's last film, *A Family Plot*, but then turned down *The Godfather* and *Marathon Man* and accepted *The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant*. He affects an offhand, entertaining manner here, making this a fun addition for movie collections. *Mike Tribby*

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Review

"His just-published memoir...proves that Dern offscreen is every bit as unpredictable, compelling and explosively honest as he is onscreen." (*Newsday*, May 29, 2007)

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**Roberta Haile:**

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