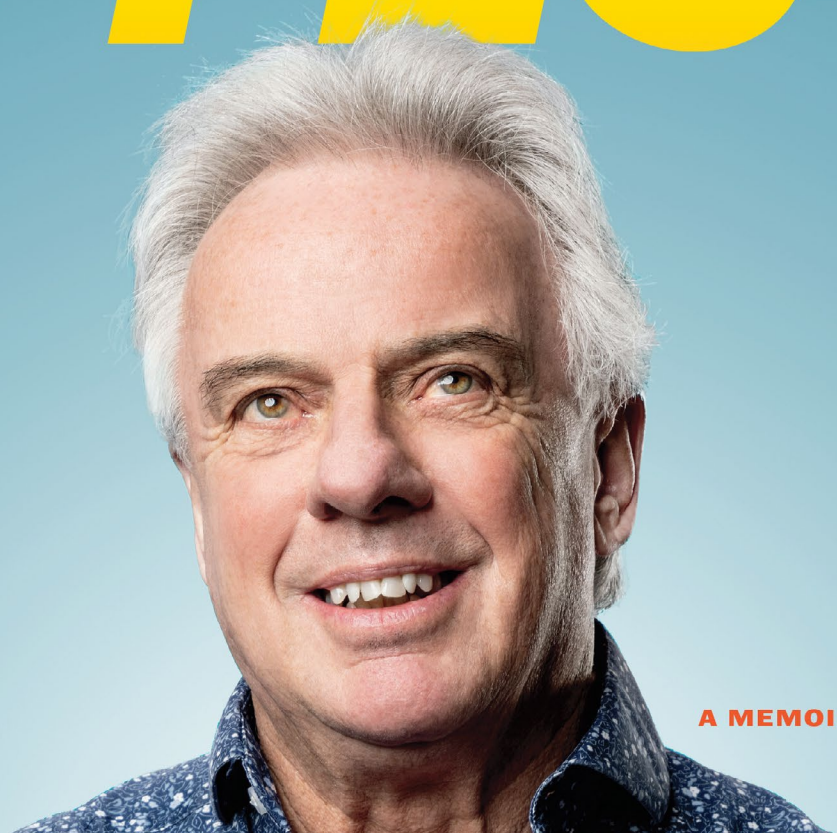


**BOB McDONALD**

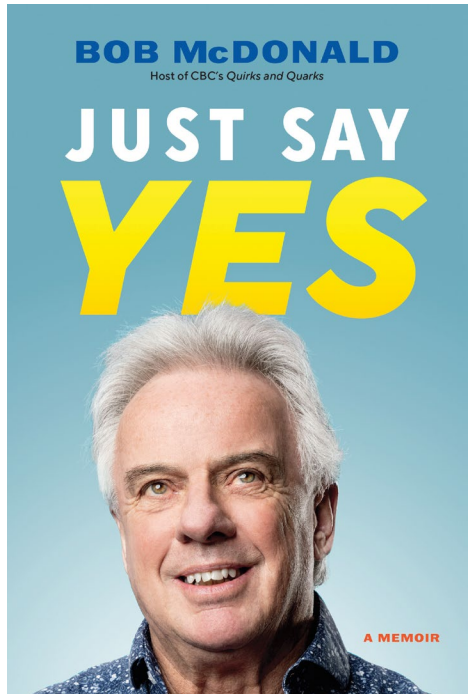
Host of CBC's *Quirks and Quarks*

**JUST SAY  
YES**



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## **Just Say Yes**

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For more information, or to schedule an interview with **BOB McDONALD**, please contact Corina Eberle: [corina.eberle@douglas-mcintyre.ca](mailto:corina.eberle@douglas-mcintyre.ca)  
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**Bob McDonald, host of CBC Radio's *Quirks and Quarks*, offers a personal and inspiring memoir of life-changing events in his early years, through five decades in science journalism, where his optimism and curiosity have made him a compelling science and ideas communicator.**

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"Bob takes his rare ability to explain the world to us all and applies it to himself in this delightful, often surprising and ever-insightful autobiography."

—**COL. CHRIS HADFIELD**, astronaut and five-time best-selling author

PHOTO: JENNIFER HARTLEY



**BOB McDONALD** has been the host of CBC Radio's *Quirks and Quarks* since 1992. He is a regular science commentator on CBC News Network and science correspondent for CBC TV's *The National*. He has been honoured with the 2001 Michael Smith Award for science promotion from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council

of Canada, as well as the 2002 Sandford Fleming Medal from the Royal Canadian Institute for Science, and the 2005 McNeil Medal for the public awareness of science from the Royal Society of Canada. In November 2011, McDonald was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. He is the recipient of thirteen honorary doctorates and, in 2014, asteroid 332324 was officially named BOBMCDONALD. Bob lives in Victoria, BC.

## **Saying yes has changed my life many times over.**

Even though I did not have much of a formal education, I stepped through windows of opportunity towards jobs and adventures I really wanted. Thanks to the encouragement of mentors, I fought the fear and finished what I started. It not only built a career as a national science journalist, but led to sailing the open ocean, crossing the continent by motorcycle and journeys literally around the globe. I want to show that if a kid from a small-town low-income family can do it, anyone can.

**–BOB McDONALD**



# Q&A WITH BOB McDONALD

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## **What are the challenges, switching from non-fiction writing to a personal memoir?**

I've included personal stories in most of my books to provide a context for the science, to make it more understandable in human terms. Writing a memoir is like standing before an audience with no clothes on. It was difficult going back to troublesome experiences from my childhood, but at the same time, it was a cleansing experience to get it out into the open.

## **Why did you write a memoir, and why now?**

People are always asking me about my background and when I tell them I'm a university dropout and former construction worker truck driver, they want to know how I went from that to hosting Canada's national science radio program. So here's the story.

## **Of the thousands of scientists you've interviewed, whose life would you like to slip into?**

I've conducted more than 7000 interviews just as host of CBC's *Quirks & Quarks*, and I had an entire career before that, so it is hard to pick a favourite. Of course, I would like to slip into the life of any Canadian astronaut, but it would also be fun to be a scientist who has adventures in the field, such as going out on a small boat over Australia's Great Barrier Reef to tag sharks with a harpoon.

## **How has science reporting changed since you began?**

When I started out science reporting was done through established media, so every story was fact checked and screened by producers or editors to ensure accuracy. Now, anyone with a camera and a YouTube channel can broadcast opinions, conspiracy theories or so-called alternative facts that attack science to fit their corporate, political or religious agendas.

The biggest challenge today is to tell the difference between real science and pseudo-science.

**What is it about motorcycling and sailing that has captured so much of your life?**

Both of these forms of transport are outdoor experiences where you are face to face with the elements. A long-distance motorcycle trip is like taking a huge walk across the country, where you feel the searing heat of deserts, cool breezes of mountain passes, and smell the wheat on the prairies during harvest time. Sailing is a humbling experience when the winds and waves pick up and you realize we don't conquer the seas, they allow us to be out there...if we are careful.



**You write about your childhood sexual abuse, once by your father and once by a stranger. Why did you decide to go public with this now?**

I wrote about my experiences as a message to victims of sexual abuse. They are horrible experiences that you will never forget. But there are ways to lock them away in a mental vault and take control of your life. If you allow the trauma to destroy your life, you are giving more power to the abuser, even after they are dead. We choose our own lives, not someone who tried to control us in the past.

# ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *JUST SAY YES*

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"How did Bob McDonald become such a gifted science communicator? I've interviewed the man plenty of times, but I never thought to ask that question. I wish I had; the answer is unconventional, bizarre, tragic, and extraordinary. It is with utmost humility Bob refers to himself as a 'science entertainer,' but I know him to be a lot more than that. If you've ever wondered what drives him to do what he does; how the cogs of his mind grind together to cast sparks onto our collective understanding of the world... read on."

—**ANDREW CHANG**, host, *CBC News Explore*

"Bob takes his rare ability to explain the world to us all and applies it to himself in this delightful, often surprising and ever-insightful autobiography. Surprising insights into the man who has been giving us insights into the universe for decades."

—**COL. CHRIS HADFIELD**, astronaut, five-time best-selling author

"This is an interesting and engaging description of Bob's eclectic life. He tells it with the same enthusiasm that has made him Canada's favorite science presenter. A great read."

—**ART McDONALD**, 2015 Nobel Physics Laureate

"*Just Say Yes* is a truly inspiring story of one man's remarkable career in science communication. Bob McDonald's infectious enthusiasm for science, and his unique ability to translate complex scientific topics into everyday language hook the reader early. We are taken on a personal journey from his humble, and at times challenging, upbringing through his myriad sailing and motorcycle adventures, to his unique experiences as a science journalist. And on this journey, one marvels at the clarity of his insight into many of the most important modern scientific breakthroughs. In this social media age of misinformation, conspiracy theories and alternate facts *Just Say Yes* is a must-read. You will come away inspired with optimism that many of today's greatest challenges will be solved if we get back to the basics of just saying yes to science."

—**DR. ANDREW WEAVER**, climate scientist and former leader of the BC Green Party

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