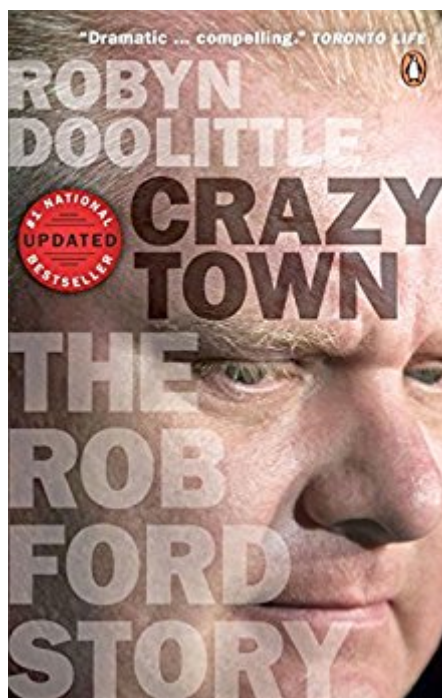


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Crazy Town: The Rob Ford Story



Synopsis

His drug and alcohol-fuelled antics made world headlines and engulfed a city in unprecedented controversy. Toronto Mayor Rob Ford's personal and political troubles have occupied centre stage in North America's fourth largest city since news broke that men involved in the drug trade were selling a videotape of Ford appearing to smoke crack cocaine. Toronto Star reporter Robyn Doolittle was one of three journalists to view the video and report on its contents in May 2013. Her dogged pursuit of the story has uncovered disturbing details about the mayor's past and embroiled the Toronto police, city councilors, and ordinary citizens in a raucous debate about the future of the city. Even before those explosive events, Ford was a divisive figure. A populist and successful city councillor, he was an underdog to become mayor in 2010. His politics and mercurial nature have split the amalgamated city in two. But there is far more to the story. The Fords have a long, unhappy history of substance abuse and criminal behavior. Despite their troubles, they are also one of the most ambitious families in Canada. Those close to the Fords say they often compare themselves to the Kennedys and believe they were born to lead. Regardless of whether the mayor survives the scandal, the Ford name is on the ballot in the mayoralty election of 2014. Fast-paced and insightful, *Crazy Town* is a page-turning portrait of a troubled man, a formidable family and a city caught in an jaw-dropping scandal.

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Customer Reviews

Robyn Doolittle and the Toronto Star, deserve a lot of credit, for the hard work in exposing the "mayor" of Toronto, the book goes into explaining all the hard journalistic work that went into the activities of the "mayor". Robyn also shows compassion for "Rob Ford". She goes into the background of the "Ford Family", and try's to explain the family dynamics and the reasons for the dysfunctional behavior of it's members, and the people he associates with, unfortunately there is one topic she does not tackle that is, " the man has mental problems."

I think it's important for people to understand how journalists work and Robyn does a good job of explaining behind the scenes activities, standards and expectations of responsible reporting. I wish those people who believe the rhetoric that Rob Ford has been unfairly targeted by the media would read this book. The media has a responsibility to report the bad behaviour of ANY person at any level of political office. The people and governing bodies have a responsibility to consider such reports honestly and address the issues if they are found to be true. Sadly, many tend to believe those who scream the loudest opinions. THE MEDIA IS TARGETING POOR ROB FORD! Yeah! I SAVED THE TAXPAYERS A BILLION DOLLARS! Yeah! SUBWAYS SUBWAYS SUBWAYS, I RETURN PHONE CALLS, I'M SORRY I'M SORRY AGAIN, I'M SORRY AGAIN.....Even more sadly, those same screamers will bully and shout over any dissenters. It's their M.O. Robyn illustrates how she and many of her colleagues are trying to bring us back to thoughtful consideration and discussion of all sides of an argument before drawing conclusions.

I live in Western Canada and travel a fair bit. While in Guangzhou, Tokyo, Mexico and in the US the last 6 months, every time I admit I'm Canadian, I'm inevitably asked about 'our' mayor. While it's disconcerting just how many people are aware of the news story - at least superficially - it's more troubling that they are associating our entire country with the Mayor of Toronto's troubles. I bought the book in an attempt to understand how it was possible he was elected in the first place and why on earth he still seems to have such wide support. I couldn't put the book down, it was a fascinating look at a politician's ability to keep addiction and criminal activity hidden for so long. The author seems to bend over backwards to show compassion for Ford, and I'm frankly not sure why. But after

reading it (all in one setting - much to my husbands irritation!) it left me feeling saddened that rich, spoiled boys with the right family connections can achieve so much in Canada. So much for earning your position through hard work, integrity, honour and diligence - ideals we work hard to instill in our children. It's a lesson in how bullying and privilege are a free pass in our society, regardless of merit. I highly recommend the book though - it's well-written, thoughtful, insightful and an excellent, fast-paced read. No matter what your thoughts are about this situation - it's certainly worth a read.

As a Toronto resident who lives their city and read, listened, observed in horror the sideshow that Rob Ford exhibited, I often felt hostage to how much presence he dominated in conversations in business dealings, social conversations and media yet was able to accomplish much of the political platform he set out to do. This gave a complete but sad insight to his demons, his struggles and his humanity. We as a city have survived and moved forward under Tory's new leadership allowing the Ford family to get the assistance they need if for no other reason than that of his young children.

I had read most of the stories in the Star and Globe and Mail prior to reading the book. Heck, while reading this, the story continued to get crazier (does anyone even know where he is right now?). But I didn't know the background of the reporting including the various contacts with drug dealers, witnesses, City Councillors, etc. Better yet, I didn't know the story of the Ford family, going back to Doug Sr.'s childhood and the troubles of other siblings. It really sheds light on a tragic situation, and shows how a voting public can be duped with hyperbole and anti-"them" fervor.

Robyn's shown herself to be a talented writer, a skilled researcher, and a good storyteller. The Rob Ford story is utterly insane, and she manages to tell it in a way that is not disrespectful or judgmental of its central character, despite his actions making him deserving of both. I found the first half really surprising -- she uncovers a version of the Ford family history that hasn't been told publicly. Definitely worth the read.

I guess I should not have expected much when a book like this comes out so close to the events it describes. Seemed like a rush job but that is far from surprising these days. Certainly good enough to get some background on the family and get one side of the story.

Rob Ford is portrayed as a very real person with great political ideas for Toronto and with disastrous failings. He promoted the building of a better public transportation system. Using his own

considerable fortune, he saved the taxpayers thousands of dollars in the basic costs of running the city government. Yet his tenure in office was marred by his problems with alcohol and drugs, his outrageous lies, and his fierce temper

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