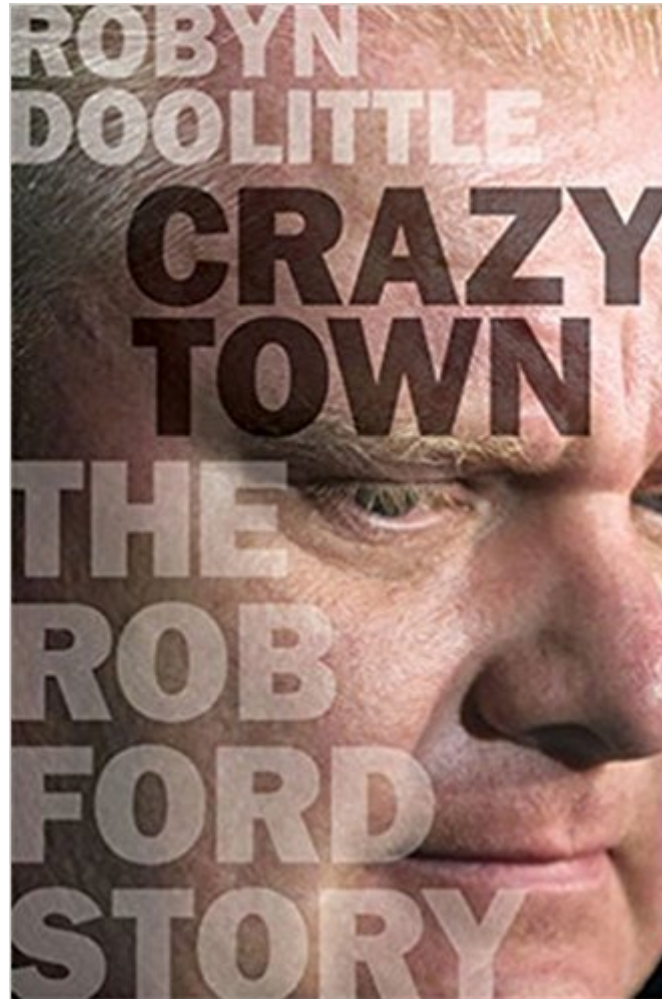




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Crazy Town: The Rob Ford Story



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 drug dealers 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 councillors, 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 Ford family has a long, unhappy history of substance abuse and criminal behaviour. 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. Doolittle says that regardless of whether the mayor survives the current crack-cocaine scandal, the Ford name will be on the ballot in the mayoralty election in 2014.

Book Information

Hardcover: 384 pages

Publisher: Viking; First Edition edition (February 4, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 067006811X

ISBN-13: 978-0670068111

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.2 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (40 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

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 sitting - much to my husband's 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 resident of Toronto I've been waiting for this book to be released, and it does not disappoint. Good flow, well detailed and footnoted. I attended an event last night, to hear Robyn speak about her experience reporting on Toronto City Hall and writing the book. She's a talented writer and also a compelling and entertaining speaker in person. I rarely read biographies or political books, I'm much more into fiction and distraction, however the importance of this issue for the people of the city where I presently live can't be overlooked. Just an editorial comment - I bought the hard cover version and intended to buy the eBook as well. Perhaps someone can explain why it is \$9.99 USD on .com, but \$14.99 CAD on .ca. At current exchange rates, an equivalent price would be \$11.10. Here's a Canadian authored book, about the largest Canadian city. I'm fortunate to have the option to buy from the US site, but the unfair pricing practices concern me.

Robyn Doolittle is one of the journalists covering the fall of Toronto's Rob Ford, and in *Crazy Town* she carefully summarizes the saga as it unfolded, through the end of 2013. While the tale will no doubt be more complete once the evidence amassed by the investigators about the various scandals comes to light when the cases go to trial, this is still a very worthwhile, entertaining, and surprising empathetic recounting of the downfall of a man wholly unfit for office.

I found the final chapter to be an absolute downer (please, PLEASE, Toronto, don't saddle the city with him for 4 more years) and had a distinct "Wait, that was it?" reaction when I finished it. This is a very engrossing read, and Doolittle deserves exoneration and respect for reporting on a story

exposing a hypocritical addicted pathological liar for what he was. May this book change some minds and sway some people away from ever voting for another Ford.

I chose to read this book, not because I am interested in Rob Ford, but because I couldn't help wondering why the people of Toronto put up with Rob Ford. The book does an excellent job of explaining the Torontonians' viewpoint. It also takes a look at how the media is perceived and how far many will go to stand by their candidate. I gave the book 4 stars instead of 5 only because it starts out a little dry. The first few chapters contain detailed facts about Ford's tumultuous history. You can tell the author is a newspaper reporter, because you almost feel like you are reading one news report after another. However, when you get further into the book, you appreciate her writing style. If she had been overly emotional one way or another, it would give credence to conspiracy claims. Besides she doesn't need to say much beyond the facts. The book is very aptly named.

If you closely followed the coverage of Ford the past couple years, you won't find any other huge bombshells here. That said, Doolittle puts the debacle of this mayoral term in context, and it is a fascinating story. I read it in a day. This was eye-opening with regard to the extremely high standards and hard work that goes into proper journalism. I had no idea. The one piece that seemed to be missing is a deeper look at Ford's wife and her family. Not that she deserves to have her life trotted out in front of the world more than it already is, but it might've helped explain some of the pathology. Being from the States, it seems that a lot of this would have come out much sooner had it been Chicago or DC, with our paparazzi culture and liberal public information laws.

Long form journalism coupled with good writing and an interesting story. Doolittle tells a fascinating story about the political ambitions of a family deep denial about the substance abuse problems plaguing nearly every member of their clan.

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