



# Stephen Harper

*John Ibbitson*

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**Stephen Harper** John Ibbitson

***The authoritative biography of Stephen Harper, to be published on the eve of the next election.***

As one of the important prime ministers in the life of our nation, Stephen Harper has reshaped Canada into a more conservative country, a transformation that his opponents tacitly admit will never be reversed. He has made government smaller, justice tougher, and provinces more independent, whether they want to be or not. Under its 22nd prime minister, Canada shows the world a plainer, harder face. Those who praise Harper point to the Conservatives' skillful economic management, the impressive new trade agreements, the tax cuts and the balanced budget, the reformed immigration system, the uncompromising defence of Israel and Ukraine, and the fight against terrorism. Critics--pointing to punitive punishments, muzzled scientists, assaults on the judiciary, and contempt for parliament--accuse the Harper government of being autocratic, secretive and cruel.

But what about the man? In this definitive new biography, the *Globe and Mail's* John Ibbitson explores the life of the most important Canadian of our times--his suburban youth, the crisis that caused Stephen Harper to quit university for three years, the forces that shaped his tempestuous relationship with Reform Leader Preston Manning, how Laureen Harper influences her husband, his devotion to his children--and his cats. Ibbitson explains how this shy, closed, introverted loner united a fractured conservative movement, defeated a Liberal hegemony, and set out to reshape the nation. With unparalleled access to sources, years of research and writing, and a depth of insight that has made him one of the most respected voices in journalism, John Ibbitson presents an intimate, detailed portrait of a man who has remained an enigma to supporters and enemies alike. Now that enigma is revealed, in a masterful exploration of Stephen Harper, the politician and the man.

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