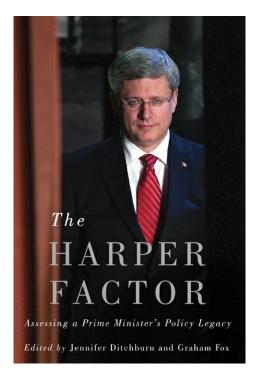
Stephen Harper's impact on public policy more nuanced, less transformative than widely claimed

New book uses evidence-based approach to assess the former prime minister's policy legacy



THE HARPER FACTOR

Assessing a Prime Minister's Policy Legacy

> Edited by Jennifer Ditchburn and Graham Fox

Book Launch: 26 October 2016, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm @ The Métropolitain Brasserie & Restaurant <u>700 Sussex Dr. Ottawa, Ontario</u> Tel – (613) 5621160

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A year after Canadians voted to replace Stephen Harper's Conservative government, a new book is challenging some of the popular analyses about the former prime minister. **The Harper Factor:** Assessing a Prime Minister's **Policy Legacy**, assembles some of the country's foremost experts to evaluate his long-term impact on Canadian public policy and institutions. Edited by award-winning political journalist Jennifer Ditchburn and respected policy analyst and think tank president Graham Fox, **The Harper Factor** is a clear-eyed take on the Conservative decade.

"Canadians have strong opinions about Stephen Harper, positive and negative. We wanted to set aside all the assumptions, and do a deeper analysis of his impact on policy," said Fox, president and CEO of the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP). "Our goal in producing this book is to cut through the partisan noise and give readers an assessment that's dispassionate and rooted in evidence."

"A prime minister's legacy is not something that can be summed up in a column or a sound bite," added Ditchburn, editor-in-chief of the IRPP's Policy Options magazine. "Anyone who is interested in current affairs and the history of our country will want to read this book to gain new insight into what Harper actually got done as PM and whether his actions will continue to shape the policy agenda in the years ahead."

The editors brought together a diverse group of experts to consider how Stephen Harper shaped public policy in their field:

- Murray Brewster on defense policy;
- Laura Dawson on international trade;
- Michael Decter on health care;
- Susan Delacourt on the conduct of politics;
- Jennifer Ditchburn on government communications and the media;
- David Dodge and Richard Dion on fiscal and economic policy;
- Graham Fox on intergovernmental affairs and Canadian federalism;
- George Hoberg on energy and climate change policy;
- Tasha Kheiriddin on justice policy;
- Senator Ratna Omidvar on immigration;
- Colin Robertson on foreign policy;
- **Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux** on the government's relationship with Indigenous peoples;
- Barry Wilson on agriculture;
- Paul Wilson on the government's relationship with Parliament; and,
- David Zussman on the government's relationship with the public service.

Ditchburn and Fox note that Harper's longevity in office undoubtedly assures him a place in history. But that is a political achievement, not a policy achievement. They conclude that from a policy perspective, Stephen Harper was not a transformational prime minister – a conclusion that is sure to surprise his most loyal supporters and ardent detractors alike.

<u>The Harper Factor</u> Assessing a Prime Minister's Policy Legacy Edited by Jennifer Ditchburn and Graham Fox

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