



Source name	The Hill Times (Ottawa, ON)
Source type	Press • Newspapers
Periodicity	Bi-Weekly or Tri-weekly
Geographical coverage	National
Origin	Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Monday, June 10, 2024

The Hill Times (Ottawa, ON)

• p. 36

• 1159 words



Party Central

The Prince and the Maher at The Met

Stuart Benson

Veteran journalist and author Stephen Maher celebrated the launch of his new book *The Prince: The Turbulent Reign of Justin Trudeau* with a book signing event at the Metropolitan Brasserie on June 4.

Lots of journalists, politicians, a former House Speaker and an ex-Conservative leader stood in line for nearly two hours at the Métropolitain Brasserie on June 4 for a signed copy of veteran journalist and author Stephen Maher’s latest book detailing the rise and reign of the “Laurentian prince” born unto this world on Christmas Day just a little over 52 years ago.

Maher’s new book, *The Prince: The Turbulent Reign of Justin Trudeau*, published by Simon and Schuster Canada, presents as “the first comprehensive biography” of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s time in office; it is clearly the kind of story the denizens of the Ottawa bubble are buzzing to read.

While less of a party and more of a book signing with a cash bar and appetizers courtesy of the Mét, Maher spent the

majority of the night—from just after 5 p.m. until well after 7 p.m. —seated at a booth signing copies of his book and chatting with attendees, rising only occasionally to replenish his beer, and then again for a speech after about 90 minutes to thank folks for coming before getting right back to the John Hancock routine.

While most people already had their copies ready to go, Jim Sherman, owner of Perfect Books on Elgin Street, was on hand selling hardcover copies for \$40, which had sold out after less than an hour, forcing Sherman to head out to get more.

Among those waiting patiently in line to have Maher sign their well-read or newly purchased copies, Party Central spotted former and current journalists, including former CBC Radio’s Chris Hall and CBC’s Kate McKenna; Politico’s Kyle Duggan; CTV’s Mike Le Couteur and Rachel Aiello; *Espirit De Corps*’ Scott Taylor; CityTV’s Glen McGregor; retired journalist Don Martin; The National Post’s Catherine Lévesque; former Toronto Star journalist Allan Thompson, now the director of Carleton

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May, left, and iPolitics’ publisher Laura Pennell with their copies of Stephen Maher’s new book at the launch and signing at the Métropolitain Brasserie on June 4.

University’s journalism program; The Hill Times’ Chelsea Nash and The Wire Report’s Paul Park. Also sighted were politicians like Sandstone Group’s Kevin Bosch and Geoffrey Regan, the former House of Commons speaker; Sussex Strategy Group’s Liam Daly; Bluesky Strategy Group’s Alyson Fair; Maple Leaf Strategies’ Alik Angaladian; Earncliffe Strategies’ Craig Robinson; McMillan Vantage’s Richard Mahoney; Summa Strategies’ Jim Armour; Proof Strategies’ Maurice Rioux; Traxxion Strategies’ Karl Bélanger; NorthStar Public Affairs’ Fred Delorey; former Conservative Leader Erin O’Toole, now a managing director at ADIT North America. And don’t forget the Hillites like Liberal MP Nate Erskine-Smith; Andrew Bevan, chief of staff to Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland; Green Party Leader Elizabeth May; Anne Mc-Grath, the NDPLO’s principal secretary; and the party’s favourite bartender, Julie McCarthy.

Unsurprisingly, with the exception of Erskine-Smith—who may or may not have been fishing for a new podcast guest now that none of the Conservative caucus will return his calls—there were no other Liberals, nor “the prince” himself in attendance. However, having to catch a plane to France for the 80th anniversary of D-Day is a pretty good excuse for the prime minister’s absence.

After about 90 minutes—presumably in order to give his signing hand a break—Maher got up to say a few words, and to thank his publisher and editors and Simon & Schuster Canada, though he lamented that his insights and expertise regarding the significance of a two-night gig by The Rolling Stones at Toronto’s El Mocambo in March 1977, or the “political, cultural, and social history of Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley” had been deemed worthy of the final draft.

Maher also thanked University of Ottawa law professor Amir Attaran and his wife Ana Ilha; Balfour; Bosch; Champ; Temple Scott Associates’ Carrie Croft; The Ottawa Citizen’s Gary Dimmock; EKOS Research Associate’s Frank Hall; freelance journalist Jen Jefferys; Mainstreet Research CEO Quito Maggi; McGregor; and Médecins Sans Frontières’ Gweneth Thirlwell, a former policy adviser to then-Liberal opposition leader Michael Ignatieff.

“Those are all people who dried my tears, bought me a beer, or gave me a place to stay,” Maher said, adding a special mention to Martin, “who didn’t actually do frig-all for this book,” but had done so for previous books alongside mentoring him when the former was arriving to Post Media and the latter was leaving.

“[Martin] was very kind of thoughtful,” Maher said. “He even put me on TV, so you can imagine he must have liked me.”

Maher also wanted to thank all of the people who spoke with him, “whether they’re named in the book or not.”

“There are an awful lot of people who took time out of their day and dealt with the stress of, ‘is it safe to talk to this guy?’ [or] ‘am I allowed to talk about that and what’s he gonna write?’” Maher said. “These are serious things, and I felt often touched that people would trust me enough.”

While Party Central has a digital copy and bailed on the line rather than asking Maher to sign an iPad, The Hill Times editor-in-chief Kate Malloy spoke with Maher about his book on May 27, and whether Trudeau’s unofficial biographer believes he will run and what his chances may be in the next election.

sbenson@hilltimes.com The Hill Times

Figure:

This initial stack of \$40 hardcover copies for purchase at the book signing on June 4 sold out in less than an hour.

Dinah Asare, left, a senior director at Kinross Gold, and Silva Costa, social performance director with Teck Resources, get a copy of their book signed by author Stephen Maher.

Jim Sherman, left, owner of Perfect Books on Elgin Street, sells retired journalist Don Martin his copy of The Prince.

Allan Thompson, left, Carleton University journalism school director and former Toronto Star reporter, and Traxxion Strategies’ Karl Bélanger.

Scott Taylor, left, publisher of *Espirit de Corps* magazine, and Geoff Regan, former speaker of the House of Commons.

Navigator’s Andrew Balfour, left, McMillan Vantage’s Richard Mahoney, and Andrew Bevan, chief of staff to Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland.

Former Conservative leader Erin O’Toole, left, now a managing director at ADIT North America, and Chris Hall.

Anne McGrath, left, NDPLO principal secretary; Bluesky Strategy Group’s Alyson Fair, and retired journalist Don Martin.

Transformational Leadership Consultants’ Laura Peck, left, and Barry McLoughlin.

The National Post’s Catherine Lévesque, left, Politico’s Kyle Duggan, and Liberal MP Nate Erskine-Smith.

The Hill Times’ Chelsea Nash, left, and CTV’s Rachel Aiello.

The Hill Times photographs by Stuart Benson