

Ron Fournier

Nationally-Acclaimed Political Columnist and Author of New York Times Best-Seller *Applebee's America*

State of Our Disunion: What's Wrong With Politics Today and The Forces That Will Shape the Future.

Fournier delivers a nuanced and provocative discussion about a historic confluence of change in American society that is forcing long-needed disruption of both major parties and other political institutions, marked by populist uprisings and a rising generation of social entrepreneurs that, together, may reinvent democracy. It will help you better understand the current political climate and your company's place in a fast-changing political climate.

Millennials: Generation Disruption's Influence on Politics, Business, and Culture. Every generation is shaped by the times they live in. For millennials, this means major economic and demographic transitions on top of a technological revolution has left them purpose-driven, goal-oriented, engaged in community service, unafraid of change, and weary of Washington, among other things. With this speech, Fournier draws on Harvard data to argue that this particular set of attributes presents all the makings of the next "Greatest Generation." Looking at millennials and what drives them, Fournier explains what this new group of social entrepreneurs who don't believe in politics as a vehicle of positive change will mean for our country and our political system. He shares how corporations can attract, best work with, and retain millennials, who are sure to disrupt the status quo, while acknowledging biases and clichés that may exist about them.

Populism: The Next Big Thing. 2016 saw a new wave of raw American populism led by candidates like Sen. Bernie Sanders and President Donald Trump, and 2020 continued to demonstrate this trend. But it's far from the first time our nation has faced a rise of populism focused on turning inward, curbing invasions on privacy, and cracking down on big banks. It also wasn't impossible to see coming; in fact, Fournier predicted the movement's rise in a poignant 2012 article in *The Atlantic* and wrote about a potential Trump presidency in his piece, "President Trump? Stranger Things Have Happened," in 2014. Putting the election of Donald Trump in historical context and drawing on examples ranging from President George Washington to Ralph Nader, Fournier looks at where this latest evolution of angry politics is coming from, the threats it presents, and how political parties may evolve as a result.

Leadership: Leading Through Disruption and Decline. How do you lead through times of great cultural change? Over the past two decades, Ron Fournier has studied three presidents in up-close and in-depth, run a business publication based in Detroit, and traveled cross-country to write the *New York Times* best-seller *Applebee's America: How Successful Political, Business, and Religious Leaders Connect with the New American Community*. As a result, he is uniquely positioned to discuss the shared attributes that allow political and business leaders to successfully lead during times of incredible disruption and decline. Pulling anecdotes from his time with everyone from President Obama to the middle-class "exurb" residents he worked with on his book, Fournier breaks down what it takes to effectively reach and inspire those you lead.

Love That Boy: What Two Presidents, Eight Road Trips, and My Son Taught Me About Raising Kids.

Drawing from his New York Times best-seller, *Love That Boy*, Fournier mixes politics and parenthood. One of the biggest challenges of parenthood today is learning to temper our expectations. We want our children to be brilliant and popular and successful -- superstars at something. Most fall short of our ideal. Some are born with disabilities, and we're taught to love them *despite* what makes them different. Ron Fournier will discuss his journey to loving his autistic son *because* of idiosyncrasies.