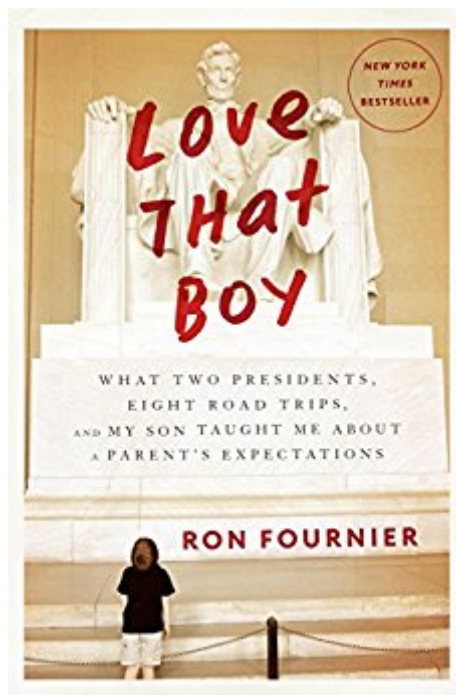


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# Love That Boy: What Two Presidents, Eight Road Trips, And My Son Taught Me About A Parent's Expectations



## Synopsis

"[A]n eloquent, brave, big-hearted book about the timeless anxieties and emotions of parenthood, and the modern twists thereon." —James Fallows, *The Atlantic* Love That Boy is a uniquely personal story about the causes and costs of outsized parental expectations. What we want for our children—popularity, normalcy, achievement, genius—and what they truly need—grit, empathy, character—are explored by National Journalist, Ron Fournier, who weaves his extraordinary journey to acceptance around the latest research on childhood development and stories of other loving-but-struggling parents.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is outstanding non-fiction, extremely well written written by a long term Whitehouse correspondent. Fournier takes his Aspergian son on a summer trip to indulge his (the son's) obsession with presidential history. They have not had a strong bond in the past- Fournier has been subsumed by his travels and career. He is disappointed in his son, who is very different from him. He does not know how to interact with him; he is clumsy and socially awkward. In the course of the

summer, he learns to appreciate his child in a new way, to respect him. The part I found most intriguing was when his son met Bill Clinton and George W Bush. Both men were very different than I expected, given my very far left political leanings. Clinton talked to the boy for a long time, but never really connected. Bush very much surprised me by being intuitive and taking the time to really draw the child out and find common ground for them to talk about. He was kind and wise. I actually like W a bit after reading this.

Although I did not read the article to which the author refers, which apparently led to an expansion into this book, I believe that this writing should be severely cut. The story of his interactions with his son, Tyler, and the paternal growth that takes place, allows the reader to witness an extraordinary boy and to learn about Asperger's. However, this does NOT make Fournier an expert on parenting, as he seems to believe. His prescription to go back to the "olden" days, when children played "hide and seek," instead of going to music lessons, or whatever, may work for him, but presents a very elitist perspective. Raised in a poor family, I still suffer at age 76 from some of the deficits in my narrow upbringing as the daughter of a poor woman with no education who worked in a factory. Fournier knows what is best for his son, but he does not have the answer for the rest of American families.

Love That Boy is written by Political Correspondent Ron Fournier. It is the story of his relationship with his son Tyler, diagnosed with Asperger's. It is also about parenting and parental expectations. There are many details in the book about how we as parents try to create children that are shadows of ourselves. Men want their sons to be sports stars and women want their daughters to be beautiful, professional, & good mothers. In other words, our expectations are often not what the child wants at all. The book outlines the experiences the writer and his son had on a series of road trips, some of which they met Former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. The book is enlightening in relation to these two powerful men and how they connect with people. They both reached towards and connected with Tyler in very different ways. This book is really about parenting and how sometimes the child is the parent. The author didn't use the term, helicopter parent, but that describes the type of parents many college aged kids have now. We do everything for them, shielding them from hurt, loss, rejection, failure. While there is no real answer in this book about what to do to be a better parent, and the author doesn't suggest we stop trying to control our children's futures, nevertheless the book is full of truths about how hard it is to parent any child these days, and especially when your child just doesn't fit in, isn't popular, or has a personality disorder, or

mental disorder such as Asperger's Syndrome or Autism. An interesting read. I recommend it. We need to slow down and listen to our children. We're all guilty of putting our own unmet dreams on the shoulders of our children and expecting them to do better than we did.

This book is a must read! Whether you have a child affected by asd or not, it is amazing!

The book should be entitled, "Love That Child". Anyone who has yet to raise their child/children, needs to read this book to better understand how to better apply his/her self to proper child rearing. I have raised my children, but would have done it much better had this book been available to me; my daughter will! Once you read this book, you will send copies to others who will also benefit by it. Thank you, Ron.

I loved the heart and soul of this book. In addition to helping readers understand Aspies, it provides so many anecdotes and research about being the best parent you can be. I appreciate the honesty and openness with which it is written and am grateful for Ron's ability to crack open his heart and share with me. Thank you and congratulations on a very fine book.

But especially at the end it reads too much as though the author is trying to convince himself and the readers that he wasn't an awful father - which indeed he wasn't, but it's not pleasant to read something like that, sort of personal and humiliating...

I have a grandson who is a aspie so it came close to what I see with my son and grandson. It's not just for families with a child that is different but for all parents of all ages. Normally this is not the type of book I would read but after seeing Ron Fournier on PBS I had to get it. I wish it was around when I was raising a family. The reading is easy and I would highly recommend it to everyone.

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