

BEN FOUNTAIN

“There may be no writer alive today who better captures the manic, fevered, paranoid style in 21st-century America than Ben Fountain.” —Rolling Stone

Ben Fountain is an attorney turned award-winning essayist and author. His debut novel, *Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk*, has been dubbed the “Catch-22 of the Iraq War.” It won the National Book Critics Circle Award, was a finalist for the National Book Award, and in 2016, *Billy Lynn* was adapted into a feature film directed by three-time Oscar winner Ang Lee.

In 2016, Ben wrote a series of essays published in *The Guardian* on the U.S. presidential election that were nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Commentary. Later, Ben decided to try to make sense of the political events of 2016 with his book *Beautiful Country Burn Again: Democracy, Rebellion, and Revolution*. In this sweeping work of reportage, Ben recounts a surreal year of politics and an exploration of the third American existential crisis (the first two being the Civil War and the Great Depression). *Publishers Weekly* calls *Beautiful Country Burn Again*, “Whip-smart and searching in its indictment of cant and falsity, this is perhaps the best portrait yet of an astounding election.”

He is also the author of a short story collection titled *Brief Encounters with Che Guevara*. Two of the stories won a Pushcart Prize, a third won an O. Henry Prize, and the book itself won a PEN/Hemingway award as well as the Barnes & Noble Discover Award. Ben’s reportage on post-earthquake Haiti was nationally broadcast on the radio show *This American Life*. Ben’s most recent work, a novel, *Devil Makes Three*, was published in 2023.

From 2004 to 2006 Fountain served as fiction editor for *The Southwest Review*. He has taught at the University of Texas, both in the English Department and at the Michener Center for Writers, and served a two-year appointment as University Chair in Creative Writing at Texas State University. In 2024, he was the recipient of the Joyce Carol Oates Prize from the New Literary Project.

Ben has lived in Dallas for over thirty years.