

## Satirist P.J. O'Rourke, panelist on NPR's 'Wait...Wait Don't Tell Me,' dies at 74

By Elizabeth Blair

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Author, journalist and political satirist P.J. O'Rourke has died. O'Rourke wrote more than twenty books about a range of topics, from politics to cars, and he was a longtime panelist on the NPR show *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!*.

According to his publisher, Grove Atlantic, O'Rourke passed away Tuesday due to complications from lung cancer. He was 74.

O'Rourke began his career writing for the *National Lampoon*, and later led the foreign affairs desk at *Rolling Stone*, where he covered world politics from the Persian Gulf to the Philippines. His books *Parliament of Whores* and *Give War a Chance* both reached #1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list.

Later in life he contributed to more conservative outlets including *The Weekly Standard* and served as the H. L. Mencken Research Fellow at the Cato Institute.

O'Rourke was born in Toledo, Ohio into a family, as he put it, "so normal as to be almost a statistical anomaly." His father sold cars and his mother was a housewife.

In the early 1990's he moved to New Hampshire, where he continued to write. According to his Grove Atlantic bio, O'Rourke lived there to get "as far away from the things he writes about as he can get."

"P. J. was one of the major voices of his generation," writes Morgan Entrekin, CEO and Publisher of Grove Atlantic, in a statement. "His insightful reporting, verbal acuity and gift at writing laugh-out-loud prose were unparalleled."

"This is a heartbreaking loss for all of us at NPR, our Member Stations, and the millions of public radio listeners who enjoyed hearing from P.J. O'Rourke as a *Wait...Wait* panelist and counted on his irreverent take on the news every week," Anya Grundmann, NPR's senior vice president of programming, said in a statement.

The staff of the quiz show hosted by Peter Sagal wrote, “[O’Rourke] made his debut as a special guest on our first show after 9/11, when we needed someone to come on and be funny about terrible things, which, of course, was P.J.’s specialty.” Their statement continues, “as much fun as he was to have on the show, he was even more delightful in the bar afterwards. We all will miss him terribly, and extend our deepest condolences to his wife Tina and his children.”

P.J. O’Rourke leaves behind his wife Tina O’Rourke and three children.

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