

## Famed Satirist P.J. O'Rourke Dead At 74

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P. J. O'Rourke, a long-time figure in the conservative movement and the author of over 20 books, has died. He was 74.

According to a statement from O'Rourke's publisher obtained by NBC News, "Our dear friend and cherished Grove Atlantic author P. J. O'Rourke passed away this morning from complications of lung cancer."

O'Rourke had a long career during which he authored 20 books, including *Parliament of Whores* and *Give War a Chance*, which both reached #1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list. He was a contributing editor at the *Weekly Standard*, an H. L. Mencken Research Fellow at the Cato Institute, a regular panelist on NPR's *Wait Wait* and served as the editor of *The National Lampoon*.

The Guardian wrote of O'Rourke in 2010:

*O'Rourke's thesis is simple: politics and nearly all politicians suck. The solution is to have less of both of them and the only people lobbying for that are rightwing, libertarian-leaning conservatives like him. They want the government to do less, spend less, take less and essentially leave people and corporations alone. If they did so, O'Rourke believes, it would make people generally and Americans in particular happier, wealthier and free from the harmful attentions of such interfering do-gooding elitists as, for example, Barack Obama.*

Alongside his prolific writing, O'Rourke was also a regular panelist on NPR.

In one interview he explained the importance of reason for the civilization. "We need to loudly disagree. But we need to do that in the context of reason. Reason is pretty much what got us civilization. Preservation of civilization is what makes me a conservative," he noted.

O'Rourke issued any number of deathless aphorisms and quotes. The Daily Wire has listed an assortment of them below:

*There is only one basic human right, the right to do as you damn well please. And with it comes the only basic human duty, the duty to take the consequences.*

*The good news is that, according to the Obama administration, the rich will pay for everything. The bad news is that, according to the Obama administration, you're rich.*

*Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys.*

*Marxism has tremendous appeal in the Third World for exactly the same reason it had tremendous appeal to me in college. It gives you something to believe in when what surrounds you seems unbelievable. It gives you someone to blame besides yourself. It's theoretically tidy. And, best of all, it's fully imaginary so it can never be disproved.*

*The Democrats are the party that says government will make you smarter, taller, richer, and remove the crabgrass on your lawn. The Republicans are the party that says government doesn't work and then they get elected and prove it.*

*You can't get rid of poverty by giving people money.*

*When buying and selling are controlled by legislation, the first things to be bought and sold are legislators.*

*If you think health care is expensive now, just wait 'til it's free.*

*Think what evil creeps liberals would be if their plans to enfeeble the individual, exhaust the economy, impede the rule of law, and cripple national defense were guided by a coherent ideology instead of smug ignorance.*

*There is a simple rule here, a rule of legislation, a rule of business, a rule of life: beyond a certain point, complexity is fraud. You can apply that rule to left-wing social programs, but you can also apply that rule to credit derivatives, hedge funds, all the rest of it.*

O'Rourke attended the Miami University in Ohio and later The Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University with a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. While at Johns Hopkins, O'Rourke said that he "wrote experimental fiction and poetry—a complete waste of time for which I received an MA."

He had three children, Elizabeth, Olivia, and Clifford with his second wife Tina, whom he married in 1995.

After rumors of his death circulated online, figures in the conservative movement wrote fondly of him.