

Author and Filmmaker John Pilger Has Passed Away

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[John Pilger](#), the veteran Australian author and filmmaker known for his investigative journalism and documentaries, has died aged 84, according to his family.

Pilger's family this morning posted to his social media accounts: "It is with great sadness the family of John Pilger announce he died yesterday 30 December 2023 in London aged 84. His journalism and documentaries were celebrated around the world, but to his family he was simply the most amazing and loved Dad, Grandad and partner. Rest In Peace."

His son, the journalist Sam Pilger, added on X: "My Dad died yesterday. I am heartbroken, but also so very proud and grateful to have had such an amazing Dad. He was my hero".

BAFTA winner Pilger was renowned for countless investigations, particularly into the plight of Aboriginal Australians, American and British foreign policy and the ulterior motives of big business. A towering figure in his field, never afraid to express controversial views, Pilger is understood to have been battling illness since early 2023.

His Twitter bio reads: 'It is not enough for journalists to see themselves as mere messengers without understanding the hidden agendas of the message and the myths that surround it.'

Pilger was born and grew up in Bondi, Sydney, Australia.

In his early years in the UK in the 1960s he worked for Reuters and the *Daily Mirror*, where he became chief foreign correspondent and reported from all over the world, covering numerous wars, notably Vietnam. In his twenties, he became the youngest journalist to

receive Britain's highest award for journalism, *Journalist of the Year* and was the first to win it twice.

In the U.S, he reported the upheavals there in the late 1960s and 1970s. He covered the marches following the assassination of Martin Luther King and was in the same room when Robert Kennedy was assassinated in 1968.

His work in South East Asia produced an iconic issue of the *London Mirror*, devoted almost entirely to his exclusive dispatches from Cambodia in the aftermath of Pol Pot's reign.

His career in TV began on Granada's *World In Action* in 1969, when he made the subversive film *The Quiet Mutiny* (1970), which revealed the shifting morale of American troops during the Vietnam War. He would go on to make numerous reports and documentaries for the BBC, ATV and ITV, among other broadcasters. Among many accolades was the Richard Dimbleby BAFTA award in 1991 and the Sydney Peace Prize.

Among dozens of acclaimed documentaries he made were *Year Zero: The Silent Death Of Cambodia*, *The Secret Country*, *The Last Dream*, *Welcome To Australia*, *Utopia*, *Vietnam: Still America's War*, *Do You Remember Vietnam?*, *Vietnam: The Last Battle*, *Death of a Nation: The Timor Conspiracy*, *The War On Democracy* and *Palestine Is Still The Issue*.

His celebrated non-fiction books include *Heroes*, *Distant Voices*, *A Secret Country*, *Hidden Agendas*, *The New Rulers of the World* and *Freedom Next Time*.

Martha Gellhorn the American novelist, journalist and war correspondent, previously said of Pilger:

"[He] has taken on the great theme of justice and injustice... He documents and proclaims the official lies that we are told and that most people accept or don't bother to think about.

[He] belongs to an old and unending worldwide company, the men and women of conscience. Some are as famous as Tom Paine and William Willberforce, some as unknown as a tiny group calling itself Grandmothers Against The Bomb.... If they win, it is slowly; but they never entirely lose. To my mind, they are the blessed proof of the dignity of man. John has an assured place among them. I'd say he is a charter member for his generation".

Writer Noam Chomsky previously described his work as "a beacon of light in often dark times. The realities he has brought to light have been a revelation, over and over again, and his courage and insight a constant inspiration."

Pilger is survived by his son Sam and daughter Zoe, both of whom are writers.

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