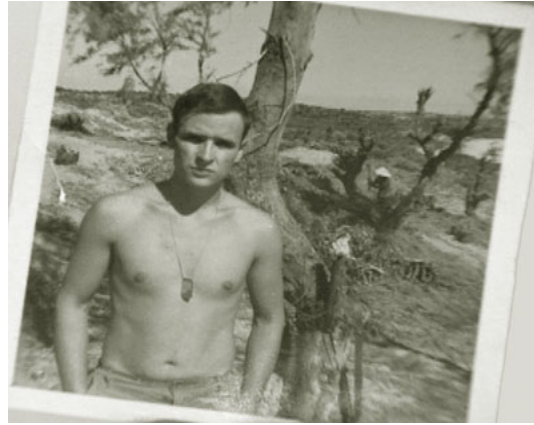


TIM O'BRIEN BIOGRAPHY

1946, October 1: born in Austin, Minnesota

1956: family moved to Worthington, Minn., "The Turkey Capital of the World" (serves as the central setting for most of his novels)

O'Brien described his hometown as "a town that congratulates itself, day after day, on its own ignorance of the world: a town that got us into Vietnam. Uh, the people in that town sent me to that war, you know couldn't spell the word 'Hanoi' if you spotted them three vowels." <https://cde.library.brown.edu/projects/WritingVietnam/obrien.html>



1968: B.A. in political science from Macalester College, St. Paul, Mn. (graduated Phi Beta Kappa)

1968: drafted into US Army:

"I went to my room in the basement and started pounding the typewriter," he recalled. "I did it all summer. It was the most terrible summer of my life, worse than being in the war. My conscience kept telling me not to go, but my whole upbringing told me I had to. That horrible summer made me a writer. I don't know what I wrote. I've still got it, reams of it, but I'm not willing to look at it. It was just stuff - bitter, bitter stuff, and it's probably full of self-pity. But that was the beginning."

<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/09/20/specials/obrien-storyteller.html>

1969-1970: sent to Vietnam, served in 3rd Platoon, Company A, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry Regiment, part of the 23rd Infantry Division (the Americal Division)

O'Brien has said that when his unit got to the area around My Lai (referred to as "Pinkville" by the U.S. forces), "we all wondered why the place was so hostile. We did not know there had been a massacre there a year earlier. The news about that only came out later, while we were there, and then we knew."

<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/09/20/specials/obrien-storyteller.html>

1971-1974: attended Harvard University (off and on) and worked for *The Washington Post* as an intern and reporter.

1973: publication of memoir *If I Die in a Combat Zone (Box me up and Ship me Home)*

1975: *Northern Lights*

1976: wins an *O. Henry Memorial* award for short story that later becomes part of *Going After Cacciato*; gives up graduate work and becomes a full-time writer

1978-1979: *Going After Cacciato*; receives National Book Award

1981: *Nuclear Age* (not centered on Vietnam War)

1990-1991: ***The Things They Carried***, finalist for Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award

1994: *In the Lake of the Woods*, named the best book of the year by *Time* magazine and wins the Society of American Historians Prize for Historical Fiction

1995: return to Vietnam

1999: *Tomcat in Love*

2002: *July, July*

2002-2023: Novel writing hiatus, teaching, raising a late-in-life family

2019: *Dad's Maybe Book*, discussion of parenting and advice to his son

2023: *America Fantastica*

