

On John Simon
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I read John Simon's obituary in *The New York Times* today. Simon was a critic—of films, plays, books, art--who wrote for magazines and newspapers. He authored a number of books, most of them collections of his short pieces. In print and in interviews, he laid his truth out there, no holds barred. What you thought of him was your business, not his. He let it fly, whatever the consequences. He was as close as anybody I can think of to being a free man. He got fired from jobs, a plate of food was famously dumped on his head, he was vilified by the self-anointed proper people left and right, and I couldn't get enough of him. I found him remarkably informed, wonderfully insightful, a delight to read, and a personal inspiration.

John Simon was old when he passed, 94, and from all I can tell, he was true to himself to the very end. By my standards, he won life's race. I'll do my best to live up to his example; not as a writer--I'm not really a writer in my own eyes--but generally as a human being.

I invite you to check him out.

You could start with the *Times* obituary to get a sense of him.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/arts/john-simon-dead.html>

You can Google "John Simon critic" and see what you find.

Go to Amazon for a list of his books and see if your local library has them. If it doesn't, it can get them for you through interlibrary loan.

He wrote a blog up to the last month of his life.

<http://uncensoreddsimon.blogspot.com>

He did Charlie Rose interviews.

<https://charlierose.com/videos/7965>

<https://charlierose.com/videos/9804>

<https://charlierose.com/videos/7907>

Whenever I have felt down and alone and discouraged over the years, I found myself going to John Simon's writing and invariably

my spirits were lifted and my resolve replenished. Rest in peace,
John Simon.