

Stanley Johnson (writer)

Stanley Patrick Johnson (born 18 August 1940) is a British author^[3] and former Conservative Party politician who served as Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for Wight and Hampshire East from 1979 to 1984. A former employee of the World Bank and the European Commission, he has written books on environmental and population issues. His six children include Prime Minister Boris Johnson; former MP and minister Jo Johnson; and journalist Rachel Johnson.

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Origins and early life

Stanley Johnson was born in 1940 in Penzance, Cornwall, the son of Osman Kemal (later known as Wilfred Johnson) and Irene Williams (daughter of Stanley Fred Williams of Bromley, Kent, who was the grandson of Sir George Williams^[4] and Marie Louise de Pfeffel).^{[5][6]} His paternal grandfather, Ali Kemal Bey, one of the last interior ministers of the Ottoman government, was assassinated in 1922 during the Turkish War of Independence. Stanley's father was born in 1909 in Bournemouth, and his birth was registered as Osman Ali Wilfred Kamal.^[7] Osman's Anglo-Swiss mother Winifred Brun died shortly after giving birth.^[8] Ali Kamal returned to the Ottoman Empire in 1912, whereafter Osman Wilfred and his sister Selma were brought up by their English grandmother, Margaret Brun, and took her maiden name, Johnson, Stanley's father thus becoming Wilfred Johnson.^[9]

Johnson's maternal grandmother's parents were Hubert Freiherr von Pfeffel (born in Munich in the Kingdom of Bavaria on 8 December 1843) and his wife H el ene Arnous-Rivi ere (born on 14 January 1862). Hubert von Pfeffel was the son of Karl Freiherr von Pfeffel (born in Dresden in the Kingdom of Saxony on 22 November 1811; died in Munich on 25 January 1890) by his marriage in Augsburg on 16 February 1836 to Karolina von Rothenburg (born in the Free City of Frankfurt on 28 November 1805; died in Frankfurt on 13 February 1872), herself said to be the illegitimate daughter of Prince Paul of W urtemberg by Friederike Porth.

Johnson attended Sherborne School, Dorset. While still an undergraduate reading English at Exeter College, Oxford, he took part in the Marco Polo Expedition with Tim Severin and Michael de Larrabeiti, travelling on a motorcycle and sidecar from Oxford to Venice and on to India and Afghanistan. The adventure led to the publication of Severin's 1964 book *Tracking Marco Polo*, with photographs by de Larrabeiti.

Work and interests

Johnson has previously worked at the World Bank, has a great interest in the environment and was the Head of Prevention of Pollution Division at the European Commission from 1973 to 1979. He is a trustee of the Gorilla Organisation and a board member of Plantlife International. In 1983 he received the RSPCA Richard Martin Award for Outstanding Services

Stanley Johnson



Johnson in 2011

Member of the European Parliament for Wight and Hampshire East

In office

7 June 1979 – 14 June 1984

Preceded by Constituency established

Succeeded by Richard Simmonds

Personal details

Born	Stanley Patrick Johnson <div>18 August 1940</div> <div>Penzance, Cornwall</div>
Nationality	British, French ^[1]
Political party	Conservative
Spouse(s)	Charlotte Fawcett (m. 1963; div. 1979) <div>Jennifer Kidd (m. 1981)</div>
Children	Boris · Rachel · Leo · Jo · Julia · Maximilian
Relatives	Ali Kemal (grandfather) <div>Carrie Symonds (daughter-in-law)</div> <div>Amelia Gentleman (daughter-in-law)</div>
Alma mater	Exeter College, Oxford (BA)

to animal welfare, and in 1984 he received the Greenpeace Award for Outstanding Services to the Environment. He was for many years an ambassador for the UNEP Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals based in Bonn, Germany.

He has published a number of books dealing with environmental issues and nine novels, including *The Commissioner*, which was made into a 1998 film starring John Hurt. In 1962 he won the Newdigate Prize for Poetry.

Since 2005

At the 2005 general election, Johnson stood for the Conservative Party in the constituency of Teignbridge, where he came second behind Richard Younger-Ross of the Liberal Democrats.

For a time, starting on 26 May 2005, he wrote a weekly column for the *G2* section of *The Guardian*, and continues to write for various newspapers and magazines, often on environmental topics. He was one of the first regular hosts of the late night discussion programme *The Last Word* on Channel 4's More4 channel, and made an appearance on *Have I Got News For You* on 7 May 2004.^[10]

On 5 May 2008, it was reported that Johnson hoped to be selected to contest his son Boris's parliamentary seat of Henley for the Conservative Party. However, on 29 May it was reported that the local Conservative party had chosen three local people as possible candidates^[11] and on 30 May, local councillor John Howell was selected to fight the by-election.^[12]

He has written a memoir, *Stanley I Presume*, which was published in March 2009.^[13]

In October 2015 Johnson was awarded the RSPB Medal by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for his role in the creation of one of the cornerstones of Europe's nature conservation policy – the Habitats Directive (1992).^[14]

In December 2015 he received the World Wide Fund for Nature Leader for a Living Planet Award ^[15]

Having supported the Remain campaign during the 2016 European Union membership referendum, in October 2017 he came out in support of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, stating that "the time has come to bail out" and cited the approach and attitude of the European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker as a major factor in his change of mind. He added that argument and debate over the length or detail of any transition or implementation period is expected but the ultimate "end-state" of the UK leaving the European Union is decided.^[16]

In November 2017, Johnson was confirmed as a contestant for the seventeenth series of *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!*.^[17] He was the fifth person to be eliminated from the show, finishing in seventh place. In 2018, alongside eight other celebrities, he appeared on the BBC programme *The Real Marigold Hotel*.

Controversy

In August 2018 Johnson said his son Boris Johnson's comments that Muslim women who wear burkas look like "letterboxes" and "bank robbers" did not go far enough, and that criticism of the comments had been "synthetic indignation" created by political opponents.^[18]

In October 2018 Johnson said that, irrespective of the solution for the border on the island of Ireland after Brexit, if the Irish people "want to shoot each other, they will shoot each other".^[19]

In November 2019 Johnson appeared on BBC's Victoria Derbyshire Show and was told that one viewer had called his son Boris "Pinocchio". Johnson replied: "Pinocchio? That requires a degree of literacy which I think the Great British public doesn't necessarily have." Johnson defended his statement by arguing that he was being humorous, but argued that it was "utterly absurd and wrong that you can read out on air a tweet coming in from one of your readers which calls the prime minister a liar. I think it is amazing you can do that."^[20]

In early July 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Johnson posted pictures on Instagram of himself travelling to Athens, Greece. He faced criticism after allegedly breaking "lockdown" rules, including from Liberal Democrat MPs Jamie Stone and Alistair Carmichael. At the time, Greece had reopened its borders but banned travel from the United Kingdom until 15 July. Johnson had circumvented Greece's rules by travelling via Bulgaria.^[21]

According to biographer Tom Bower, he punched his first wife so hard in the face he broke her nose.^[22] According to Bower, Johnson's wife said, "He broke my nose. He made me feel like I deserved it." And, "I want the truth to be told."^[23]

Personal life

Johnson married the painter Charlotte Fawcett in Marylebone in 1963, with whom he had four children: Boris, Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; Rachel, journalist and former editor-in-chief of *The Lady*; Jo, former Conservative MP for Orpington, former Minister of State for Universities and former Head of the Lex Column at the *Financial Times*; and Leo, film-maker and entrepreneur. Johnson and Fawcett divorced in 1979. He married Jennifer Kidd in Westminster in 1981 and they had two children, Julia and Maximilian.^{[24][25][26]}

In December 2020, Johnson claimed that he was entitled to French citizenship by descent, from his mother, and stated that he was applying for a French passport to retain mobility and residence rights in the European Union.^[27]

Works

- *Gold Drain* (1967, Heinemann) ISBN B0000CNKG6
- *Panther Jones for President* (1968, Heinemann) ISBN 0-434-37701-5
- *Life without Birth: A Journey Through the Third World in Search of the Population Explosion* (1970, Heinemann) ISBN 0-434-37702-3
- *The Green Revolution* (1972, Hamilton) ISBN 0-241-02102-2
- *The Population Problem* (1973, David & C) ISBN 0-7153-6282-8
- *The Politics of Environment* (1973, T Stacey) ISBN 0-85468-298-8
- *The Urbane Guerilla* (1975, Macmillan) ISBN 0-333-17679-0
- *Pollution Control Policy of the EEC* (1978, Graham & Trotman) ISBN 0-86010-136-3
- *The Doomsday Deposit* (1979, EP Dutton) ISBN 0-525-09468-7
- *The Marburg Virus* (1982, Heinemann) ISBN 0-434-37704-X
- *Tunnel* (1984, Heinemann) ISBN 0-434-37705-8
- *Antarctica: The Last Great Wilderness* (1985, Weidenfeld & N) ISBN 0-297-78676-8
- *The Commissioner* (1987, Century) ISBN 0-7126-1587-3
- *World Population and the United Nations* (1987, Cambridge UP) ISBN 0-521-32207-3
- *Dragon River* (1989, Frederick Muller) ISBN 0-09-173526-2
- *The Earth Summit: The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)* (1993, Kluwer Law International) ISBN 978-1-85333-784-0
- *World Population - Turning the Tide* (1994, Kluwer Law International) ISBN 1-85966-046-0
- *The Environmental Policy of the European Communities* (1995, Kluwer Law International) ISBN 90-411-0862-9
- *The Politics of Population: Cairo, 1994* (1995, Earthscan) ISBN 1-85383-297-9
- *Icecap* (1999, Cameron May) ISBN 1-874698-67-8
- *Stanley I Presume* (2009, Fourth Estate Ltd) ISBN 0-00-729672-X
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- *Where the Wild Things Were: Travels of a Conservationist* (2012, Stacey International) ISBN 1-906768-87-0
- *UNEP The First 40 Years; A Narrative by Stanley Johnson* (2012, United Nations Environment Programme) ISBN 978-92-807-3314-3
- *Stanley I Resume* (2014, Biteback) ISBN 978-1-84954-741-3
- *Kompromat* (2017, Point Blank) ISBN 978-1-78607-246-7

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External links

- Stanley Johnson (<http://www.stanleyjohnson.org/>) personal site
- Biographical Note (https://web.archive.org/web/20070704005109/http://orgclassic.eea.europa.eu/news/Ann1096279340/cv_StanleyJohnson), European Environment Agency
- Channel 4 Election Weblogs - Stanley Johnson (http://www.channel4.com/news/microsites/E/election2005_blogs/johnson_blog.html)
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- Interview with Stanley Johnson, London 2011, for History of the European Commission (1973-86) (<http://archives.eui.eu/en/files/transcript/16515.pdf>)

European Parliament		
New constituency	Member of the European Parliament for <u>Wight and Hampshire East</u> 1979–1984	Succeeded by <u>Richard Simmonds</u>

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