



Break on Through: The Life and Death of Jim Morrison

By James Riordan, Jerry Prochnicky

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Thirty-five years after his death in Paris at age twenty-seven, Jim Morrison's iconic legend remains as powerful as ever, swathed in the mists of mystery. There have been numerous biographies about the self-proclaimed "Lizard King's" life and career. But none have examined his roots and childhood, the intellectual foundations of his music, his wild days with the Doors, and his enigmatic early death as completely and insightfully as Break On Through.

More than simply a fascinating look at a rock legend whose cult following never stops growing, here is the definitive Morrison biography: his angry relationship with his father; the early tragedies and terrible events responsible for the darkness of his artistic vision; his private life and legal trials, including his infamous Miami obscenity bust; and the truth about his final hours. Based on extensive research and featuring dozens of rarely published photographs, this is the authoritative portrait of the poet, the grim visionary, the haunted man, and his haunting music.

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- Rank: #224251 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-10-27
- Released on: 2014-10-27
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

While for the most part covering familiar territory in tedious fan-club style, this tome does present credible new material about the death of its subject, Doors singer Jim Morrison. Photos.

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From Kirkus Reviews

Tortured visionary and bumbling drunk--two sides of "The Lizard King" that emerge from this lengthy but less-than-probing biography of the late rock star. Riordan (a Rolling Stone contributor) and Prochnicky (a self-professed veteran Morrison scholar) attempt to retrace Morrison's "aural, visual, and psychological journey" through "a fun house mirror" of Sixties-style metaphysics. They recount Morrison's repressive childhood under a Navy captain father, his youth as school misfit and troublemaker, his post-college life as a Venice beach-bum, and his subsequent descent into an acid-inspired "spiritual netherworld." Morrison comes across as an insecure but creatively driven man prone to extreme mood swings, and an emotional manipulator who "enjoyed dangling people from his own self-styled parapet." In some respects, he seems a hippie Oscar Wilde who strove for recognition as a serious poet only after establishing a notorious persona. But it is less the star and more the martyr that surfaces here, with gruesome accounts of Morrison being beaten by cops, lambasted by finicky critics, verbally abused by audiences, and incessantly drained by a neurotic girlfriend. Riordan and Prochnicky try to bolster the Morrison mythos by mentioning his love of Nietzsche, romantic attachment to shamanism, undying interest in film history, and gift for surrealist thinking that nurtured his work but abetted his "failing to draw the line between art and life, business and pleasure, self-instruction and self-destruction." Unfortunately, they sidestep any fresh or bold interpretations of Morrison's mystique, resorting to redundant drugstore psychologisms and a disturbing zeal to discount any allegations of Morrison's thinly veiled homosexual side. Worse, the authors promise to delve into Morrison's subtle lyrics but opt instead for shallow and rushed summaries. Candid and articulate but essentially a star-struck reminiscence that fails to transcend the packaged legend. For more compact and worthy biographies of Morrison, see David Dalton's *Mr. Mojo Risin'* and Dylan Jones's *Jim Morrison* (p. 466). (Twenty-five b&w photographs--not seen.) -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

About the Author

James Riordan is the author of *The Platinum Rainbow*. His interviews with and stories about major rock stars have appeared in *Rolling Stone* and other national magazines, and he was a consultant on Oliver Stone's film *The Doors*. He lives near Chicago.

Jerry Prochnicky researched the Jim Morrison story for more than twenty years. He lives in Southern California.

Users Review

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James Blouin:

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