



James Douglas Morrison was born in Melbourne, Florida December 8, 1943 to Clara and Steve Morrison. Clara was a housewife daughter of a lawyer. Steve was an officer in the U.S. Navy. Jim had two younger siblings: a brother, Andy, and a sister, Anne was the youngest of the three. Jim, at an early age, was a fervent reader. Although he exhibited great leadership and intelligence also showed a tendency to challenge authority. This disrespect of authority led him to get kicked out of Cub Scouts for torman Den Mother through constant misbehaving.

Because of the position Jim's father had in the military, the family was required to move often due to transfer orders. The family moved from Florida, to New Mexico, and eventually to Alexandria, Virginia in 1958. While in Virginia, Jim continued to clown and heckle and out of class. He became quite popular amongst his classmates, and eventually met Tandy Martin, his first girlfriend. During his time in Virginia, Jim also continued to read. He found interest in Nietzsche, Plutarch, Ginsberg, Michael McClure, James T. Farrell, Studs Lonigan, James Joyce's Ulysses, Balzac, and the French Symbolists (most important of these poets being Arthur Rimbaud about who Morrison would write the song Wild Child about). By the time he reached the age of fifteen, Jim was writing poetry, and was identified as having an I.Q. of 149. During this time he also made a habit of sneaking out of his house at night to go to bars downtown and listen to blues musicians.

1961 brought with it Jim's graduation from high school. Immediately, his parents sent him to St. Petersburg Jr. College in Florida where he was also made to live with his grandparents. During the following year, Jim became tired of living with his grandparents and decided to transfer to Florida State University and major in theatre. He lived a mile from campus in a bedroom house with five other FSU students, only two of whom he had known previously. Due to his same heckling shenanigans, his roommates asked him to move out. This time at FSU was productive, however. It brought about several important events which greatly influence Jim's life. First, he took Philosophies of Protest and Psychology of Crowds, which he identified later as two of his favorite classes (that would in the future aid him in his role as lead singer of the Doors). He also wrote a research paper on the imagery of heaven and hell in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch. Finally, he managed to get a part in Harold Pinter's play The Dumbwaiter without having any previous acting experience. By 1964 Morrison had gotten tired of the theater arts department and transferred to UCLA where he became part of the film school.

During the week, Jim would go to his film classes and participate in school schedules, but during the weekend he went to Venice Beach and wrote poetry (the poems he wrote during this time would be later put together and made into the volume The Lord: The New Creatures.) On the beach of Venice he read Jung and Dylan Thomas, and began to experiment with drugs (primarily marijuana). It was also here on Venice Beach where Jim would run into Ray Manzarek and decide to create The Doors. Jim was a graduate in 1965 with a Bachelor's Degree in cinematography from UCLA, and began putting most of his attention into the music of The Doors. During this initial stage of the Doors touring and gig-hunting, Jim met Pamela Courson, one of the two primary women that he would refer to as his "soul mate." The Doors rose to new heights from 1964 to 1970, but as their fame increased, so did his addiction to alcohol and drug experimentation.

This time between 1964 and 1970 not only held trials and tribulations for Jim Morrison - it also held some of his happiest experiences. During this time Jim Morrison came to meet the second important woman in his life, Patricia Kennealy. It was Patricia Kennealy Morrison who eventually married him in a Celtic pagan handfasting ceremony in June of 1970. Morrison and Kennealy had a relationship away from Jim's addiction. Kennealy wrote in her book Strange Days: My Life with an Addict Without Jim Morrison that Jim stayed with Pamela because she allowed him his addictions. Kennealy also writes that she knew the real Jim, the quiet, reserved trickster and not Jim the loud. Despite Kennealy and Jim's love, however, Jim chose to escape to Paris in 1970 with Pamela.

He retreated to Paris because he had become disenchanted with the fame he had received as The Doors' front man and the unseriousness with which he was taken as a poet. Paris offered a sanctuary. It was the home of Arthur Rimbaud, his most powerful literary influence. He hoped that this new atmosphere would allow him to find a sense of himself in the world and provide him with inspiration to create fresh poetry. Unfortunately, this goal was never achieved. Instead, Jim was left uninspired and severely depressed. On July 3, 1971, Jim was found dead in the bathtub of his and Pamela's Parisian apartment. His body was then buried at the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris.

Although the circumstances of Morrison's death have been debated, it is now believed (as reported in Patricia Kennealy's book as well as Jerry Hopkins' book The Lizard King: The Essential Jim Morrison) that Jim's death was indirectly caused by Pamela. Whether she doped up herself or not, Pamela reportedly allowed Jim to snort up a large quantity of heroin, which he believed to be cocaine. The sudden ingestion of such a large quantity of a drug he had never used before led him to hemorrhage internally, which sent him into a state of shock, and eventually led to the heart attack which killed him. Jim Morrison died at the age of 27.