

September 13, 2009, 6:17 pm

## Jim Carroll, Poet and Punk Rocker, Is Dead

By [The New York Times](#)

Jim Carroll, the poet and punk rocker in the outlaw tradition of Rimbaud and Burroughs who [chronicled his wild youth](#) in “[The Basketball Diaries](#),” died Friday at his home in Manhattan. He was 60.

The cause was a heart attack, said Rosemary Carroll, his former wife.

As a teenage basketball star in the 1960s at Trinity, an elite private school on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Mr. Carroll led a chaotic life that combined sports, drugs and poetry. This highly unusual combination lent a lurid appeal to “The Basketball Diaries,” the journal he kept during high school and published in 1978, by which time his poetry had already won him a cult reputation as the new Bob Dylan.

The full obituary by William Grimes can be found [here](#).

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[books](#), [music](#), [Jim Carroll](#), [The Basketball Diaries](#)

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1. September 13, 2009 10:21 pm [Link](#)

The news hit me like a ton of bricks. So sad, so sad to lose such a bright literary light.

— *Tim Thomas*

2. September 14, 2009 12:18 am [Link](#)

Jim Carroll, I'll miss you more than all the others.  
This post is for YOU, my brother.

— *ETK*

3. 3. September 14, 2009 12:36 am [Link](#)

I remember a great show at the 688 in Atlanta. Sad news.

— *p*

4. 4. September 14, 2009 12:37 am [Link](#)

Man, this is bad news. as far as I'm concerned, this should be the front page news of the day. I just saw him walking up ave...was it b or c? with a little girl. I ran into him at the poetry project a couple times. what a cool, benevolent creature. basketball diaries...what a classic. catcher in the rye, whatever. this guy had poetry in him. even book of nods. of course, no one would ever SAY it... god forbid we mix vices with the keys to heaven...

— *borschtt*

5. 5. September 14, 2009 2:05 am [Link](#)

AS A KID CHECKING HIS WORK,MUSIC/BOOKS, CHANGED ME FOR THE BETTER! RIP!  
WICKED GRAVITY! THANK YOU.

— *WH.ONE*

6. 6. September 14, 2009 2:14 am [Link](#)

So sorry to hear, Jim Carroll's "Catholic Boy" album is must listening, especially the cut "People Who Died".

Norm Zinker

— *Norm*

7. 7. September 14, 2009 3:17 am [Link](#)

Nobody else could ever have filled up First Avenue, Minneapolis' premier music club, for a poetry reading.

— *Nobody*

8. 8. September 14, 2009 7:56 am [Link](#)

He's person that died, died.

— *Outer Boro Adam*

9. 9. September 14, 2009 8:12 am [Link](#)

Thank you, Jim Carroll, for taking us places we'd have never gone on our own. You outlived your "People Who died;" still, you left us far too soon.

— *zrah*

10. 10. September 14, 2009 8:45 am [Link](#)

RIP

— *jk*

11. 11. September 14, 2009 8:50 am [Link](#)

didnt know he was still alive

— *amber*

12. 12. September 14, 2009 10:43 am [Link](#)

not another one.  
not this one.  
wotta effin bummer.

feel fortunate to have experienced jim live alive and rockin.  
his voices will endure.

-al

— *al deKay*

13. 13. September 14, 2009 10:43 am [Link](#)

Like Buddy Holly, don't fade away....maybe just dribble off-nothin but net.

— *Jam Master*

14. 14. September 14, 2009 11:14 am [Link](#)

He was a great one ,to have seen him live in a club was speacial to me an so many more. He will never die in my mind i can still hear his songs when i close my eye's

— *PAUL S.*

15. 15. September 14, 2009 11:15 am [Link](#)

I saw him read one night in Ann Arbor; one of the best nights.

— *Chris McCreedy*

16. 16. September 14, 2009 12:32 pm [Link](#)

Sad news , I just found out today .  
RIP Jim .

— *Dan McIntyre*

17. 17. September 14, 2009 12:35 pm [Link](#)

I saw him in DC at The Black Cat. He'll be missed.

— *Chris Shepard*

18. 18. September 14, 2009 12:46 pm [Link](#)

His work has left an everlasting impression on my heart, brain and soul.

— *Adrienne Wilson*

19. 19. September 14, 2009 1:39 pm [Link](#)

wabbit, west in peace.

— *mcd*

20. 20. September 14, 2009 2:29 pm [Link](#)

Saw Jim Carroll in 1988 at the Bottom Line for a poetry reading. He will surely be missed. Loved his prose, books and music.. What a shame.

— *David Potter*

21. 21. September 14, 2009 3:10 pm [Link](#)

You younger folks should also check out “Sharon Tate” for a good piece of music. That whole “Catholic Boy” album is worth a listen.  
Thanks for the music and poetry Jim- RIP, we love you.

— *Architect*

22. 22. September 14, 2009 3:36 pm [Link](#)

Basketball Daries was my “catcher in the rye”.

— *Greg deB*

23. 23. September 14, 2009 3:36 pm [Link](#)

The song is “It’s Too Late”

— - *anon*

24. 24. September 14, 2009 4:23 pm [Link](#)

In 1978 I lived at the Chelsea Hotel in New York City. One afternoon I heard a knock on my door. When I opened it there stood a tall, drugged out looking, skinny guy about my age with stringy red hair. With him were two other guys that were larger and even scarier looking than him. With a fast talking New York accent and a desperate tone the red headed one held up an LP and blasted into this rapid fire sales pitch: “Listen, I know you don’t know me but my name is Jim Carroll and I have a band called The Jim Carroll Band and I am on Rolling Stones Records and Tapes. I have a single coming out next month called “People Who Died”. I just this minute got back from England and what I have here in my hand is a copy of the new Rolling Stones album called “Some Girls”. This THE ONLY COPY THAT EXISTS IN THE UNITED STATES. I haven’t even heard it. Nobody has heard it, not one single person in the U.S. has heard it, but YOU can be the first. My only question to you is: DO YOU HAVE A STEREO?”

Now wait a second, yes I had a stereo, a very nice one as a matter of fact. More importantly I also had a fair amount of drugs in my room that took a whole day of hustling to get and I wasn’t about to let this trio of losers bust into my room and take my shit. The album did look authentic though with the Rolling Stones logo and the red-head’s story had a ring of authenticity so I let them in.

As everyone knows the first song on the album is “Miss You” which begins that opening line “nah nah nah nanana” in falsetto. We all had a hard time figuring out if I had the turntable set at the right speed but of course I did. We then listened to both sides of this fabulous album and it was of course, great.

On the way out Jim flipped a paper back book to me which of course was “Basketball Diaries” and said: “Check it out, this is the story of my life. One day you can say you met me.”

Now I am glad to say that I did.

— *Dennis Spencer*

25. 25. September 14, 2009 5:27 pm [Link](#)

I have been a big fan of Jim’s music and poetry for years. I first learned about Jim from the Basketball Diaries movie and from there I read everything he published, listened to his music, and was fortunate enough to see him perform several times and even meet him in person. During my first year of college I

remember writing several term papers about the cultural significance of Jim's work. His poems and stories showed such a range- some were quirky and funny, others bizarre and frightening, but all were deeply imaginative, sincere and unique. What I loved most about Jim's work was that he was never afraid to share his most personal thoughts, experiences and emotions, and convey them to the reader in a way that only the truly gifted artists can. His work was artistic without pretense, the purest and most authentic form of punk rock. Although he hasn't published much in the past few years, Jim leaves behind a body of work that will stand the test of time.

— *-anonymous fan*