

# punk turns 30

vintage  
punk  
photos by  
theresa k.

Monday, September 14, 2009

## [Jim Carroll, RIP](#)



*Dave Treganna, [Dave Parsons](#), [Jim Carroll](#) and Stiv Bators, NYC, 1981*

He whose most well-known song was "People Who Died" has died. Poet, singer/songwriter, spokesman for a generation, **Jim Carroll** passed away in his home while working (writing). A heart attack took him from us on Friday, September 11, 2009. He was 60 years old.

Just about [a year ago](#), my good friend, **Dave Parsons**, of **Sham 69** forwarded to me that photo above, of himself, former Sham bassist, **Dave Treganna**, and **Stiv Bators** with **Jim Carroll**, whom we all met in NYC when the Daves and [Stiv](#) toured as **The Wanderers**. I took at photo backstage at the Palladium, when the Wanderers opened for the **Ramones** there in 1981.

You can read more about our [Wandering Into Jim Carroll](#) here on punkturns30... the link is to last year's post and memories of how Jim Carroll taught Stiv and me how to maneuver the night life in Manhattan.

We all *knew* who Jim Carroll was back then... *The Basketball Diaries*, the til-then culmination of a young

life's worth of living and writing about it landed his name and his works on the mind-sets of anyone with taste who paid attention to music and literature in 1978. I had the great opportunity to see him do his first rock n roll performance that same year at the [California](#) Theatre in San Diego, CA. He opened for [Patti Smith](#) and he read from *The Basketball Diaries* and Patti joined him on stage, guitar in hand. Afterwards, Patti introduced me and my friends to Jim and I have a most cherished photo (unscanned, but hanging up safe and sound in my house in California) of Patti, Jim and me together from that night.

Since then, it seemed that I'd run into Jim every 3 years or so, and he was always working on something new. Most recently, it was a winter in New York City about five years ago, we met in a book shop in NYC's [Chelsea](#) neighborhood and talked about [Jack Kerouac](#). We talked about the new music we were listening to, talked about the state of culture, and just plain gossiped about current times. Jim Carroll was a man whose opinion took no prisoners... he was direct and lyrical at once. Just a week before talking with Jim about Kerouac, I had tea with Patti Smith and we too talked about Kerouac (it was the occasion of his birth and the two poets contributed testimonials which I recorded for a radio program). Full circle.

It was Patti Smith whose work inspired me to stick to my guns, and it was Patti Smith who encouraged Jim Carroll in his poetry and music.

But it was always Jim Carroll who, for me, helped me understand the balance of dreams and reality... not just in his work - his words written for all to read, but in his words spoken directly to me.

The world has lost a unique voice - [RIP](#), Jim Carroll.

[NY Times Obit](#)

at [12:47 AM](#)  

Labels: [jim carroll](#), [jim carroll death 2009](#)

**3 comments:**

[N. Rosa](#) said...

Oh my, I'm in shock. RIP.

[5:53 AM](#) 

[Bryan Rutt](#) said...

"You get nothin' back for all you've saved  
Just eternity in a spacious grave"

Gonna miss Jim a lot. Thank you for sharing your remembrances of him.

[11:01 AM](#) 

[GutterDandy](#) said...

Too bad they made such a crap movie out of Jim's diary. But he lived on reselling the film rights to that book for years before it was finally made. I last saw him playing rock and roll in Boston with a pick-up band only about four years ago, and on that night, he was fairly straight and did a great, sharp set full of all the wonderful songs that I wanted to hear. I'm so glad I got to see that show (as well as a similar great one by another contemporary of Jim's, Willy DeVille, a couple of years back at B.B. Kings in NYC). As for literary output, about 10 years ago Jim said he "almost" had not one, but *\*two\** novels done, then by last time I saw him, it was down to one, and it was pretty much obvious that there really were no novels forthcoming, that it had been a kind of running gag. It seemed that Jim never quite cleaned up enough to really get his career rolling again, but the last bit of audio he put out, the album *\_Pools of Mercury\_* (1998) was a nice mix of rock and poetry and up to his usual high standards. Jim didn't put out crap. Rest in peace, JC.

[11:34 AM](#)