

## The Doors: Listening/Reading/Watching

### LISTENING:

#### The Studio Albums:

*The Doors* (Elektra, 1967). A strong contender for the best debut album of all time, this introduced a mixture of rock, jazz, confrontational poetry, blues, and intoxicating Indian-middle eastern melodies that sounded like nothing that had preceded it. “Light My Fire” is the hit everyone remembers, but other classics on the album included “Break on Through,” “The Crystal Ship,” and “Take It As It Comes.” The eleven-minute closer, “The End,” was almost unprecedented in rock for its epic length, and their most controversial number both onstage and on record. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition has the stereo and mono versions, plus eight tracks (available elsewhere) recorded live at the Matrix on March 7, 1967. (The instructor of this course wrote a lengthy essay on the album for the Library of Congress’s National Recording Registry, which can be viewed at <https://www.loc.gov/programs/static/national-recording-preservation-board/documents/TheDoors.pdf>.)

*Strange Days* (Elektra, 1967). While some critics retrospectively regarded this as their strongest album, at the time and often since then, it was usually thought not as stunning or innovative as their debut. But while it didn’t break nearly as much ground as *The Doors*, it still had good-to-excellent songs in the style they had firmly established as their own, including the hits “People Are Strange” and “Love Me Two Times.” The spooky “You’re Lost Little Girl” was also one of their finest tracks, and they showed willingness to experiment within their framework with the use of Moog synthesizer on the title number and the musique concrete of “Horse Latitudes.” The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition has the stereo and mono versions.

*Waiting for the Sun* (Elektra, 1968). Although it made #1, their third album was sometimes panned as a disappointment or, worse, sellout or quasi-bubblegum. It wasn’t as forceful or imaginative as their 1967 LPs, but in hindsight is an overall fine record, if not as

stuffed with strong songs. “Hello, I Love You” was a #1 single (if strongly reminiscent of the Kinks’ “All Day and All of the Night”); “The Unknown Soldier” one of their best tracks, and one of the greatest rock anti-war statements; and “Spanish Caravan” a successful venture into flamenco-rock. Numbers like “Love Street,” “Summer’s Almost Gone,” “Wintertime Love,” and “Yes, The River Knows” showed their mellower side to good effect, and the skin-crawling “Not to Touch the Earth” was all they could salvage from their attempt at a side-long opus, “The Celebration of the Lizard.” The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition has the stereo and mono versions. A third disc has rough mixes of nine of the eleven tracks, plus five rather lo-fi songs from their September 17, 1968 concert in Copenhagen.

***The Soft Parade*** (Elektra, 1969). Usually tagged their worst album, but that’s relative with a band whose standards were as high as the Doors. They decided to use some brass and orchestration for some of the material, with mixed results. More problematic was the lower and less consistent quality of the songwriting, resulting in some weak and forgettable tracks. Yet half of the record is very good, including the big hit “Touch Me”; the spellbinding “Wild Child”; the overlooked whirling “Shaman’s Blues”; and another of their long epics with the title track. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition has a bonus disc with some mixes that remove the string and horn overdubs, and a few blues covers with Ray Manzarek on vocals. Another bonus disc with the same edition has a few rambling outtakes, most notably the hour-long improvised jam “Rock Is Dead,” excerpts of which had previously circulated.

***Morrison Hotel*** (Elektra, 1970). Even without a hit single, this was roundly acclaimed as an artistic and commercial comeback for the Doors, who went for a somewhat bluesier harder-rocking sound and forsook the brass and strings they’d experimented with on *The Soft Parade*. The opening party rocker “Roadhouse Blues” (with John Sebastian on harmonica) is by far the most famous song, but “Waiting for the Sun” (making a belated appearance after failing to make their 1968 album of the same name), “Peace Frog,” “Ship of Fools,” and “Land Ho!” all rate among their best lesser-known album tracks. Their more reflective side was also heard on “Queen of the Highway,” “Blue Sunday,” and “Indian Summer.” A 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

edition with an entire CD of outtakes and alternate takes will be released on October 9, 2020.

***L.A. Woman*** (Elektra, 1971). Their final album with Jim Morrison was a strong if somewhat uneven finale. Much of the record finds them approaching straight blues-rock, albeit with more poetic and idiosyncratic lyrics than either blues musicians or contemporary blues-rock bands were apt to use. But the best material branched into more of their trademark mix of blues and rock with classical and jazz elements. “Love Her Madly,” one of their most pop-friendly creations, was a hit; so was “Riders on the Storm,” their most haunting piece; and the lengthy title track has become one of the anthems of the city of Los Angeles itself.

### **Live Albums:**

There are many official Doors concert albums, all but one of them released long after the group broke up—often decades later. I’ve divided this listing into the ones that are the best and/or most historically interesting, and the ones that are more for completists and the most serious fans.

***Absolutely Live*** (Elektra, 1970). The only live album the Doors issued while Jim Morrison was alive was a sprawling double LP that didn’t quite deliver what fans might have been expecting. Few of the songs chosen were among their most popular, and none of them match the studio versions. Yet at the same time, the live versions are different enough to be interesting, if only because they sometimes go on for quite a bit longer, and because Morrison in particular seems not to be taking himself or the material overly seriously. They also took the opportunity to include a ‘50s rock’n’roll cover (“Who Do You Love”), a blues cover with Ray Manzarek on vocals (“Close to You”), and some modestly interesting original compositions (“Universal Mind,” “Build Me a Woman”) that didn’t make it onto their studio LPs.

***London Fog 1966*** (Rhino/Bright Midnight Archives, 2016). In some ways, this is the worst official Doors live release, both in fidelity and performance. In others, however, it’s among the most historically interesting. For these are the earliest surviving tapes of

the group in concert (and the only ones predating 1967), taped by a fan/friend in May 1966 as they were wrapping up their residency at the London Fog on Sunset Strip. Surprisingly, and perhaps disappointingly, they show the Doors as a rather average club band just three months or so before recording their epic debut LP. Most surprisingly, their repertoire is dominated by R&B/blues covers, including unlikely songs by Little Richard and Wilson Pickett. Morrison and Manzarek don't sound too different from how they would on records, but Krieger isn't as commanding, and Densmore's drums are shockingly clumsy. The sole shafts of originality hinting at the distinctive band they'd become are on the two originals, "You Make Me Real" (not to be recorded in the studio until *Morrison Hotel*) and, much more memorably, "Strange Days." While "The End" was also recorded at the London Fog at this time, unfortunately that reel hasn't been found.

***Live at the Matrix '67*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2008). The best *and* most historically interesting of the Doors' live recordings, as it captures them after their debut LP was released, but before it or "Light My Fire" had become hits. Taped at San Francisco's Matrix Club during shows in early March 1967, it's a surprise to hear them playing their hearts out to a small and not terribly appreciative audience, judging by the sparse clapping. But it includes versions of most of the songs from their first album, and, even more interestingly, early versions of quite a few that would show up on *Strange Days* and *Waiting for the Sun*, including "People Are Strange," "My Eyes Have Seen You," "When the Music's Over," "Unhappy Girl," "Moonlight Drive," and "Summer's Almost Gone." What's more, there are some blues/R&B covers that wouldn't make their studio albums, among them "Money," "Gloria," "Get Out of My Life Woman," "I'm a King Bee," and Bo Diddley's "Who Do You Love" (which ranks as their best R&B cover), as well as an instrumental rendition of the pop standard "Summertime." Note that as extensive as this double CD is, four CDs' worth of recordings from their March 1967 Matrix shows have been bootlegged, although all of the other material is different versions of songs that are represented on the official set.

***Live at the Bowl '68*** (Elektra/Rhino, 2012). The Doors' concert at the Hollywood Bowl on July 5, 1968 was probably the highest-

profile show they gave. Fortunately it was filmed—and since the entire performance is available on DVD, it's preferable to see and hear it in that format instead of just hearing it on CD. Should you just want to check out the music, however, it's a satisfactory performance of some of their most popular songs and the odd obscure one, though it's disappointingly short on surprises and long on rather distracting between-tune spoken-sung ramblings/poems. The most familiar classics here include "Light My Fire," "Hello, I Love You," "Moonlight Drive," "The Unknown Soldier," and "The End." The least familiar, and hence in some ways more interesting, are a dynamic "Spanish Caravan" and a brief preview of "The WASP (Texas Radio and the Big Beat)," which wouldn't make it onto an album until 1971's *L.A. Woman*.

***Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970*** (Eagle Vision/Bright Midnight, 2017). The Doors only did two concerts with Jim Morrison after this one at the Isle of Wight on August 29, 1970. Considering how much material the band had to draw from by this point, it's disappointing that there are only a couple songs postdating their first two albums, "Roadhouse Blues" and the only truly unusual selection for the set, "Ship of Fools." As good as "Break on Through" and "Light My Fire" are, there are many other live versions. At least this version of "The End" inserts a much of different improvised-sounding bits, including a little of the blues classic "Crossroads" and meditations on "Across the Sea" and "Away in India." It's nonetheless a historic document, and the band play pretty well. Morrison's singing, interestingly, is fine, although it's been reported with some reason that his voice was seriously fraying by the time they began work on their final album with him a few months later, *L.A. Woman*. It's also fairly good value, as a DVD of the filmed set is packaged together with this CD on a separate disc.

### **The Rest:**

***Boot Yer Butt!: The Doors Bootlegs*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2003). This rather weird four-CD set gathers live material from 1967-70 that had previously appeared on bootlegs, virtually all of it sounding sources from hissy audience tapes. Even hardcore devotees are going to find it tough to play for repeated pleasure. For the very serious fan-verging-on-scholar, this does offer a lot of unusual live

performances, the excerpts spanning March 4, 1967 (at the Avalon Ballroom in San Francisco) to their second to last show with Jim Morrison (on December 11, 1970, in Dallas). Along the way, you get quite a number of songs that don't surface in many live versions on bootlegs, like "Wild Child," "Spanish Caravan," "Who Scared You?," "Blue Sunday," "People Are Strange," and (from the 1970 Dallas concert) several songs from the then yet to be released *L.A. Woman* album. There is also a bunch of covers they never put on their albums, including "Little Red Rooster," "I'm a Man," "Money," "Carol," "Rock Me," "Mystery Train," and "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," though truth to tell these are generally pretty dire. There are also some pretty offbeat arrangements of more familiar standards, like a "Break on Through" from 1968 with Manzarek subbing for an indisposed Morrison, and a 20-minute "Light My Fire" from 1970 in which Morrison briefly intersperses bits from "Fever" and "Love Hides" in the instrumental break. There are some between-song raps as well, including a couple excerpts of such from the infamous March 1969 concert in Miami that eventually dragged Morrison through the courts on charges of lewd public behavior.

***Live at the Aquarius Theatre: The First Performance*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2001). The Doors' shows at the Aquarius Theatre in Hollywood on July 21, 1969 were recorded for a possible live album, although they weren't released at the time. This double CD of their first set shows, like numerous other archival releases to follow (see remainder of this list), that neither the songs nor the performances of their concerts would vary much in the final year or so they played onstage with Morrison. This and the other half-dozen-plus releases of live material from this era are essentially similar to *Absolutely Live*, with enough variation to make them interesting for collectors and obsessive fans. As a notable benefit, the sound on this is very good, and there are surprises here and there, namely "You Make Me Real" (before the release of the studio version on *Morrison Hotel*, though it been around since at least May 1966) and a medley of "Mystery Train" and "Crossroads."

***Live at the Aquarius Theatre: The Second Performance*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2001). As you'd expect, this double CD of their second performance on July 21, 1969 is similar to the first, repeating some of the same songs. On the whole it's more

interesting, however, as it has a few songs they didn't do in their first show, or indeed much at all on surviving recordings. These include "Touch Me," "The Crystal Ship," "Peace Frog" (as an instrumental), "Blue Sunday," and the covers "Little Red Rooster," "Gloria," and "Rock Me Baby."

***Backstage and Dangerous: The Private Rehearsal*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2002). The day after the Doors' shows at the Aquarius in Hollywood (see above listings), they recorded some material without an audience in the same venue, with the intention of incorporating some of them into a live album that might be compiled from the performances in front of an audience. That live album was never produced or released, but this double CD of recordings without an audience from July 22, 1969 came out in 2002. The title's misleading: they don't sound particularly dangerous, and in fact rather tentative, and sometimes tepid, as can often be the case in rehearsal-like circumstances. In fact, the actual performances are often half-baked bluesy jams. So it's another "for serious fans" archival compilation, but is of interest for including some early, sometimes very rudimentary versions of songs that would show up on *Morrison Hotel* and *L.A. Woman*, including "Peace Frog" (as an instrumental), "Blue Sunday," "Maggie McGill," and "Cars Hiss By My Window." There's also quite a bit of profanity from Jim Morrison at times, which comes off as more juvenile than dangerous.

***Live in New York*** (Rhino, 2009). On January 18 and 19 of 1970, four shows the Doors did at the Felt Forum in New York were recorded for possible use on a live album. Indeed some of these performances were used on *Absolutely Live*. All four of the shows, however, are here in their entirety. (Note that because of a microphone failure, guest artist John Sebastian re-recorded the harmonica parts for the three songs on which he appeared in 2009.) Unsurprisingly, this is a bit like hearing a six-CD version of *Absolutely Live*, with multiple versions of quite a few of the songs. That will test the patience of non-fanatics, but if there weren't people like the instructor fanatical enough to listen to stuff like this, you might not have a Doors course at all. For those willing to dive in, there are surprises here and there, like really good versions of "Who Do You Love," "Moonlight Drive," and "Light My Fire";

previews of some *Morrison Hotel* songs that hadn't yet come out, like "Maggie M'Gill," "Peace Frog," "Blue Sunday," "Roadhouse Blues," and (the best of the batch) "Ship of Fools"; and a smattering of blues covers never to be released on Doors discs during Morrison's lifetime ("Little Red Rooster," "Money," "Rock Me"), though these aren't that great. It's also not that great that "Wild Child," one of the few songs here they didn't often do live, breaks down and never gets completed; that the "Petition the Love With Prayer" spoken intro to "The Soft Parade" is not followed by "The Soft Parade" itself; and that Morrison plays up the humor in his between-song banter, though it's often silly. And for a guy with obscenity charges hanging over him, he's surprisingly willing to throw in some profanity from time to time. The band's shows would remain fairly similar throughout the rest of the first half of 1970, as the numerous other archive releases detailed below show.

***Live in Boston*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2007). Three-CD set of both of the shows they gave in Boston in April 10, 1970 (recorded for use on *Absolutely Live*), adding up to about three hours of music, all but two of the tracks previously unreleased. Well, three hours of mostly music, it should be clarified; it's padded by a whole lot of Jim Morrison raps and crowd reaction, to the point where it starts to seem like there's less music than speech by the end of the second show. It's yet sloppier and looser than *Absolutely Live*, if for no reason other than it doesn't benefit from the editing together of several different performances into one double LP. This includes several songs that aren't available in many live versions on legitimate or illegitimate releases, like "The Spy," "You Make Me Real," "Been Down So Long," and "Ship of Fools," along with a few expected classics. There are also a bunch of unexpected covers that, as enticing as they look on paper, are rather fragmentary and half-developed (and sometimes thrown in the middle of another tune), like "Mystery Train," "Fever," "Rock Me," "Crossroads," "Summertime," and "St. James Infirmary Blues." While these add to the value of this release by virtue of their falling outside the band's usual repertoire, they also demonstrate that the Doors weren't such a great straight blues-rock band -- something that it seems like the group are changing into at times when listening to this set.

***Live in Philadelphia '70*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2005). One of

several concerts from which *Absolutely Live* was sourced is offered in its entirety on this double-CD of a May 1, 1970 show. Like *Absolutely Live*, it finds the band in a loosey-goosey state that drifts close to sloppiness, albeit with an engaging tipsy humor. Except for a few obligatory staples (“Light My Fire,” “Break on Through,” “Roadhouse Blues”), the group seemed determined not to play overly familiar tunes, even reaching back on occasion to their bar band days as a poor man’s Rolling Stones for B.B. King (“Rock Me Baby”), Elvis Presley (“Mystery Train”), and Chuck Berry (“Carol”) covers. Most of the tracks were previously unreleased, and it’s not all hits or covers, the set list including such relatively little-traveled songs as “Ship of Fools,” “Universal Mind,” and “Maggie M’Gill.” Certainly Jim Morrison’s in a lewd ‘n’ bluesy mood, and for a guy with obscenity charges hanging over his head, he lets it all hang out with surprisingly graphic recklessness on “Rock Me Baby” -- could anyone have doubted what “you feel so wet...let me slide inside” really meant?

*Live in Pittsburgh* (Rhino, 2008). With so many official CDs of the Doors in concert in the first half of 1970 now available, this single-disc release of material from their May 2 show has to count as one of the less essential. The repertoire’s similar to the other CDs from this time, and the performances, though solid, don’t stand out as either too remarkable or different from the tapes made at surrounding gigs. Still, the sound’s good, and there are the usual non-LP oddities like covers of “Mystery Train” and “Crossroads,” the nearly fully formed original ballad “Someday Soon,” the improvised-sounding “Away in India,” and a very long (22-minute) “When the Music’s Over,” which incorporates bits of other songs into the piece.

*Live in Detroit* (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2000). Double CD of their May 8, 1970 show (with John Sebastian guesting on guitar and harmonica on a few songs) that doesn’t stand out too much in the company of the numerous other archive CDs of 1970 live Doors performances. This has the extended intro to “Break on Through” about dead cats and dead rats in top hats that was excerpted for *Absolutely Live*, and a few more blues rock’n’roll covers than usual, including Chuck Berry’s “Carol” and Slim Harpo’s “I’m a King Bee,” as well as a medley of “Rock Me Baby” and “Heartbreak Hotel.” More satisfyingly unusual selections are “You Make Me Real” and

“Ship of Fools,” as well as a nine-minute “Been Down So Long,” about a year before the studio version came out on *L.A. Woman*. “Mean Mustard Blues” is just a generic, improvised-sounding blues with Manzarek on rough lead vocals.

***Live in Vancouver 1970*** (Bright Midnight/Rhino, 2010). Two-CD set of recordings from their June 6, 1970 show in Vancouver, made with two on-stage microphones on a reel-to-reel. The fidelity is actually pretty good, if not as state-of-the-art as some other Doors concert tapes. But there aren’t too many surprises to be had, with yet more versions of live staples like “Roadhouse Blues,” “Alabama Song,” “Back Door Man,” “Five to One,” and “When the Music’s Over.” Things do get more interesting with a performance of “Love Me Two Times” and, more notably, the blues covers “Little Red Rooster,” “Money,” “Rock Me,” and “Who Do You Love.” Although they do feature a surprise guest appearance by blues great Albert King on slide guitar, only a seven-minute “Who Do You Love” (with some improvised lyrics in the middle) really cooks. Side two is given over almost entirely to a 17-minute rendition of “Light My Fire” that briefly incorporates snippets of “St. James Infirmary” and “Fever,” followed by a finale of “The End” that lasts about as long. Other bits of interest to hardcore fans are found in a between-song Jim Morrison rap, where he exclaims in praise of Vancouver, “You can’t imagine how refreshing it is to come out of a sewer like Los Angeles and breathe some fresh air for a change.” He also well-intentionedly, if inaccurately, hails the blues as “about the only original art form America has created in 200 years.”

### **Best-ofs:**

***The Very Best of the Doors*** (Elektra, 2007). There are a bunch of best-of Doors compilations, but this two-CD, 34-song set has all of their most popular songs and then some, including “Light My Fire,” “Hello, I Love You,” “L.A. Woman,” “Riders on the Storm,” “The Unknown Soldier,” and “The End.”

### **Box Sets:**

***Perception*** (Rhino, 2006). All six of the studio albums with Jim Morrison are in this box set, which has more than just the music

from the original LPs. Each of the albums has been expanded with the addition of numerous outtakes and alternative versions that weren't issued at the time. Each also has an accompanying DVD with 5.1 surround sound/new stereo/Dolby digital mixes and, more importantly, some live and TV film clips and promotional videos. Each of the albums also has historical liner notes. For all its size, there are still many other officially released Doors recordings containing live and studio material not on this box. But this has everything they released during Morrison's lifetime (with the exception of the *Absolutely Live* album), and quite a few significant extras.

**Box Set** (Elektra, 1997). Considering how extensive the Doors discography is for a band that only put out seven actual albums while Jim Morrison was in the group, it probably comes as no surprise that there are several Doors box sets. Equally unsurprisingly, these duplicate a lot of the material that's available on other releases, and even on other box sets. The plainly titled four-CD *Box Set*, however, is of interest for emphasizing rarities and live material. Of particular note are the six demos they recorded in September 1965 before Krieger joined, which are rudimentary but nonetheless include early versions of "Hello, I Love You," "My Eyes Have Seen You," "Summer's Almost Gone," "End of the Night," and "Moonlight Drive," as well as "Go Insane" (later to be incorporated into "Celebration of the Lizard"). The 64-page booklet includes lots of comments from the surviving Doors, and a reprint of a short 1993 essay on the band from producer Paul Rothchild.

### **Miscellaneous:**

**L.A. Woman 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** (Elektra/Rhino, 2011). Disc one of this expanded edition presents the original *L.A. Woman* album; disc two has alternate versions of seven of the ten songs, plus the frivolous blues-jammy outtake "She Smells So Nice" and the blues cover "Rock Me." In keeping with many such archival releases, the alternate versions are rougher and looser than the more polished, finished studio ones, without drastic differences in the arrangements. Fans will still appreciate the lengthier variations, with both "Riders on the Storm" and "L.A. Woman" lasting nine minutes. It's odd, however, that this doesn't have the 1969 demo of

“Hyacinth House” (one of the songs not represented by an alternate version), recorded at Krieger’s home studio, that appeared on *Box Set*. The second disc of outtakes was issued separately as *L.A. Woman: The Workshop Sessions*.

*An American Prayer* (Elektra, 1978). Seven years after Morrison’s death, the three surviving Doors got together to put backing music to spoken word recordings Jim made of his poetry in 1969 and 1970. The music was rather tepid compared to what the band had played behind Morrison on his actual songs, and Morrison’s poems weren’t as interesting as the songs he sang. Still, it carries historical interest as documentation of his work as a poet, which according to some reports he wanted to be more than he wanted to be a singer, though it’s his work with the Doors that will be much more strongly remembered. Predictably, the track to get most attention was the sole archival musical performance: a live version of “Roadhouse Blues” from 1970.

Ray Manzarek, *Myth and Reality: The Spoken Word History* (Ray Manzarek Archives, 1996). Two-CD set spoken word set, not of poetry, but of Ray Manzarek reminiscing about his life and the Doors, almost as though it’s one side of an interview without the questions. Although Manzarek can be sentimental here and elsewhere in his interviews, much of this is pretty interesting, touching not only upon various aspects and highlights of the Doors’ career, but also on his pre-Doors personal life and time at UCLA’s film school. Of course a lot of this territory is covered in his autobiography, though he comes off more likable as a spoken presence than as a writer, as his prose can slip into pretentiousness.

## BOOKS:

*The American Night*, by Jim Morrison (Vintage, 1991). Like *Wilderness*, this is a compilation of mostly previously unreleased writing by Morrison, mostly poetry, though some song lyrics are included. Of particular interest is a screenplay, *The Hitchhiker: An American Pastoral*, which was the basis for the rarely screened film *HWY*, which Morrison starred in, wrote, produced, and co-directed. On the printed page, however, it comes off as something of a slasher B-movie, with plenty of amoral violence.

***Angels Dance and Angels Die: The Tragic Romance of Pamela and Jim Morrison***, by Patricia Butler (Schirmer, 1998).

As the subtitle says, this focuses on the relationship between Morrison and Pamela Courson, split about half and half between Jim and Pamela's stories when it's not discussing them together. Although this is peripheral to the main Doors story as Doors-related books go, it's well done, and contains some interesting info about Morrison and the Doors that doesn't recycle the common stories.

***Becoming Elektra: The True Story of Jac Holzman's Visionary Record Label***, by Mick Houghton (Jawbone, 2010).

Inevitably this has quite a bit of overlap with Holzman's autobiography/Elektra oral history *Follow the Music* (see listing below), and isn't quite as good as Holzman's book. Still, this has lots of coverage of Elektra, naturally including their relationship with the Doors, their most successful act.

***Break on Through: The Life and Death of Jim Morrison***, by James Riordan & Jerry Prochnicky (William Morrow, 1992). Though not as celebrated as some Morrison or Doors books, this is still the best and most level-headed biography of their lead singer, inevitably serving almost as a Doors biography too.

***The Doors By the Doors***, with Ben Fong-Torres (Hyperion, 2006). Coffee table book organized as an oral history of the Doors, with many quotes from band members and a good number from several of their close associates, like producer Paul Rothchild. There are also plenty of pictures and illustrations, some of them uncommon.

***The Doors in Their Own Words***, by Andrew Doe & John Tobler (Omnibus, 1988). Thin (96-page) but interesting compilation of quotes from all four of the Doors, and a few rock critics, about their records, career, concerts, and controversies. Unfortunately these don't identify the sources of the Doors' quotes, though at least the years are given.

***The Doors: The Illustrated History***, by Danny Sugerman (William Morrow, 1983). Although Sugerman's well known as co-author of the best-selling Jim Morrison biography *No One Here Gets*

*Out Alive*, actually he doesn't write anything here besides the introduction. Instead, this is a compilation of 1967-1971 press about the band, including articles, interviews, media bios, and concert reviews. Even in the Internet age, much of this material is difficult to access, and it's a valuable compendium of first-hand source coverage of the Doors while they were active, with lots of photos. Confusingly, this is not the same book as an identically titled one that came out in 2015 (see below review).

***The Doors: The Illustrated History***, by Gillian G. Gaar (Voyageur Press, 2015). A basic, not-quite-200-page coffee table consolidation of the Doors' career rather than an extremely comprehensive one with groundbreaking research. But it gives a good summary of the basics, and has lots of good photos and illustrations. There are also essays by half a dozen other critics on each of the Doors' studio LPs with Jim Morrison, including one on their debut by the author of this course. Confusingly, this is not the same book as an identically titled one that came out in 1983 (see above review).

***The Doors on the Road***, by Greg Shaw (Omnibus, 1997). Extremely detailed, chronological rundown on every known concert the Doors gave, from 1965 through their last post-Morrison gig in 1972. There are also plenty of pictures and poster reproductions, and a list of their known unreleased material (some of which has come out since the book's publication). While this is the kind of specialist volume geared toward hardcore fans, the text is quite readable and descriptive, not just a dry conveyance of what happened when.

***The Doors: Summer's Gone***, by Harvey Kubernik (Otherworld Cottage Industries, 2018). Over a period of decades, Kubernik's done interviews with all the Doors (except Jim Morrison), numerous close and not-so-close associates of the band (ranging from producer/engineer Bruce Botnick to a bodyguard), and numerous people who just saw, wrote about, or had some contact with them. Excerpts of many of these, plus a few reviews, are in this oral-histories-of-sorts anthology. Although the design's basic low-budget and the organization is a little scattered, for serious Doors fans, there's a lot of interesting stuff here, albeit with some fairly trivial

material and inessential basic Doors criticism/appreciation in the mix

***Follow the Music: The Life and High Times of Elektra Records in the Great Years of American Pop Culture***, by Jac Holzman and Gavan Daws (FirstMedia, 2000). The autobiography/oral history of the founder and president of Elektra Records has, naturally, some sections on the Doors, the most successful act on the label. However, it covers Elektra's entire journey from 1950 through the early 1970s, which encompassed every phase of the folk revival, classical music, sound effects records, world music, psychedelia, and singer-songwriters. In addition to many comments by Holzman, it draws on extensive interview material with many Elektra Records artists, producers, and employees, including Ray Manzarek and Paul Rothchild.

***Jim Morrison: An Hour for Magic***, by Frank Lisciandro (Delilah, 1982). Lisciandro studied film alongside Morrison at UCLA, and worked on the *Feast of Friends* movie about the Doors. There isn't much text in this 160-page book, whose main value is photographs of Jim Morrison (and some of the Doors) from the late '60s and early '70s. There are, however, some short sections with Frank's memories of Doors shows and sessions he attended, as well as from when he was hanging out with Morrison in non-professional situations.

***Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend***, by Stephen Davis (Gotham, 2004). This 500-page work doesn't add an enormous amount to what's known about the Lizard King. But Davis did get access to some unpublished Morrison journals, as well as memories from a good deal of people who knew the mercurial singer and poet, including some who spent time with Jim in Morrison's final days in Paris. However, Davis undervalues, indeed sometimes belittles, the contributions and talents of the other Doors, and makes some blown-up deductions from circumstantial evidence that smack of sensationalism.

***The Jim Morrison Scrapbook***, by James Henke (Chronicle, 2007). As a book, this slim 64-page production isn't much, with a basic recap of the Doors story. However, in addition to some rare

photos, it does have a couple dozen pieces of removable facsimile memorabilia, like Morrison's handwritten lyrics to "L.A. Woman" and "Riders on the Storm." Most interesting of all is a letter confirming his estranged father did offer some support for Jim in the aftermath of his arrest in Miami, though their contact was still quite limited. It also comes with a sixty-minute CD of interviews with Morrison in 1970 and 1971.

*Journey to the End of the Night*, by Louis-Ferdinand Céline (New Directions, 1932). Jim Morrison was influenced by lots of literature, from Friedrich Nietzsche and the Beats to non-fiction social criticism by Colin Wilson. This French novel is listed because it has perhaps the most direct influence on a Doors song, providing part of the inspiration for the lyrics and title of "End of the Night" from their first album.

*Light My Fire: My Life with the Doors*, by Ray Manzarek (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1998). Manzarek's memoir is a little more in depth than Densmore's (see listing below). He was always the most eager of the Doors to celebrate their accomplishments, and as was his wont, has a sunnier and more ebullient tone than the drummer. He also lapses into some florid prose and sentimentality, but this is still a valuable part of Doors literature, though not among the top tier of rock memoirs as a whole.

*The Lizard King: The Essential Jim Morrison*, by Jerry Hopkins (Plexus, 1992). Perhaps feeling that he should do a somewhat more serious book than the best-selling one he co-authored with Danny Sugerman (*No One Here Gets Out Alive*), Hopkins went solo for this effort. It duplicates some material from his and other previous Doors books, but adds some more, though it isn't structured in a standard biographical form, emphasizing his new info and personal interactions with Morrison as a writer. It thus isn't one of the first stops for learning about the Doors, but is worthwhile for those trying to find out everything they can. As a valuable supplement, it ends with a hundred pages of interviews Morrison gave between 1968 and 1971.

*The Lords and the New Creatures*, by Jim Morrison (Simon and Schuster, 1970). Originally self-published as two volumes in 1969,

this puts both together into the only widely available compilation of Morrison's poetry to be issued in his lifetime. As sometime girlfriend Patricia Kennealy wrote in her memoir *Strange Days*, "the best of Jim's poetry is his songs."

***Moonlight Drive: The Stories Behind Every Doors' Song***, by Chuck Crisafulli (Carlton, 1995). Detailed description and critical analysis of every original song the Doors put on their albums of the 1960s and 1970s—even the two done after Morrison died and *An American Prayer*, as well as the original compositions first issued on *Absolutely Live*. It draws on numerous first-hand interviews with Doors associates and second-hand quotes from a wide source of other interviews, and is abundantly illustrated with pictures.

***My Days with the Doors and Other Stories***, by Doug Lubahn with Cal Deal (administrator@douglubahn.com, 2007). With large print, a good deal of white space, and plenty of pictures, this 150-page self-published memoir isn't exactly the most in-depth account, especially as more than a third of it goes into his post-Doors days with unrelated artists. But there are some good inside stories of playing bass with the Doors on three of their late-'60s albums, including track-by-track notes about his bass work on each of the songs to which he contributed.

***No One Here Gets Out Alive***, by Jerry Hopkins and Danny Sugerman (Warner Books, 1980). This best-selling biography of Jim Morrison, more than any other event, was responsible for reigniting interest in the Doors on a massive scale—interest that has never waned since then. Nearly four decades later, its flaws are apparent, most notably a sometimes adulatory tone. More seriously, subsequent books have filled in a lot of gaps in research that this effort doesn't address. Still, it has a lot of the basic info, and benefits from some first-hand perspective as both authors knew Morrison: Hopkins as a journalist, and Sugerman as a teenage fan whom Morrison befriended.

***Riders on the Storm: My Life with Jim Morrison and the Doors***, by John Densmore (Dell Publishing, 1990). Densmore seems more articulate and intelligent in his numerous interviews than he does in his book, which is more in line with the standard rock

memoir in its abundance of re-created conversations and too-frequent lyric quotes. It's not as good as Manzarek's autobiography, but still has plenty of first-hand stories of value.

***Way Down: Playing Bass with Elvis, Dylan, the Doors & More: The Autobiography of Jerry Scheff***, by Jerry Scheff (Backbeat, 2012). Session musician Scheff was an important contributor to the *L.A. Woman* album, so it's disappointing that just a few paragraphs of his memoir are about the Doors, though they're cited in the subtitle. Here's a summary of his key observations, so you don't have to buy the book for them: Scheff does make a point of stating that contrary to reports as to Jim Morrison's state of dissolution at the time, he was certainly serious about music and the recording process, and the record was not "the work of a bunch of out-of-control drug addicts and alcoholics." As to legends that Morrison "drank so much that he had to record his vocals in the restroom because he needed to be close to the toilet so that he could relieve himself at any point," Scheff adds, "that's not how I remember it at all. Jim may have recorded one or two songs in there, but only because [engineer-producer] Bruce Botnick liked the echo it produced."

Finally, the instructor's lengthy blogpost on various aspects of the Doors that are often overlooked in coverage of the band are at [www.richieunterberger.com/wordpress/the-doors-are-open](http://www.richieunterberger.com/wordpress/the-doors-are-open).

#### DVDs:

***The Doors*** (Eagle Vision, 2008). One of numerous entries in the "Classic Albums" series examining major albums in depth, this is a 90-minute documentary on the Doors' first, best, and most influential album. All three surviving Doors were interviewed, as well as manager Bill Siddons, Jac Holzman, engineer Bruce Botnick, and a few other friends and associates.

***The Doors Are Open*** (Pioneer, 1968). Television documentary of the Doors' 1968 visit to the UK contains perhaps the best performance footage of the band, shot at a show at the Roundhouse in London.

***The Doors Collection*** (Universal, 1999). This is a kind of messy compilation centered around three documentaries of sorts that repeat some content available in fuller and better quality elsewhere, like their Hollywood Bowl concert, the *Feast of Friends* film, and their 1969 appearance on the PBS *Critique* program. It does benefit, however, from a couple important extra features: two short UCLA student films Ray Manzarek made in the mid-1960s, both of which feature his future wife, Dorothy Fujikawa. Manzarek himself stars in *Induction*, in which Jim Morrison can be very briefly spotted in a party scene.

***The Doors From the Outside*** (Sexy Intellectual, 2009). The many rock documentaries from the Sexy Intellectual company are made on a limited budget, are not authorized by the artists, and don't have many first-hand interviews with the artists/band members or extensive vintage film footage. That noted, there's still some material of interest in their productions in general, and in this one they did for the Doors in particular. Like many of their documentaries, it relies to a large degree on talking-head comments by numerous rock critics, including the instructor of this course. But there are also interviews with figures who did know the Doors pretty well, even if they were fairly peripheral to their core story, like Billy James, who signed them to Columbia (for whom they made no recordings before voiding their contract and moving to Elektra); Richard Goldstein, one of several journalists who interviewed and became friendly with Morrison; Patricia Kennealy, one of the most serious of Morrison's girlfriends aside from his main one, Pamela Courson; and Mark Benno, who played some session guitar on the *L.A. Woman* album. With two hours and twenty minutes, it's not skimpy, and while it's not as authoritative as the numerous DVDs in which the Doors themselves participated, it's worth a view by committed fans.

***Feast of Friends*** (Eagle Vision, 2014). Jim Morrison and Ray Manzarek became friends as UCLA film students before forming the Doors, and never entirely gave up their cinematic ambitions. There's no getting around it, though: produced by the Doors and filmed with the help of some other friends from their UCLA days (and given limited screenings in 1969), this 40-minute quasi-documentary is chaotic and often hard to watch. There's some performance footage,

but otherwise it's a jumble of scenes, some offstage, from their touring in 1968. From Bob Dylan's seldom-screened 1966 European tour quasi-documentary *Eat the Document* onward, a good number of rock acts have been unable to resist making a messy art statement rather than a straightforward record of the musical highlights of a tour or juncture in their career. This fits in that tradition, though it's notable as a cinema verité movie of some of their professional career in 1968, as displeasing as it often is aesthetically. The DVD release does add a lot of value in the extra features by including the entirety of the far more straightforward 1968 British tour documentary *The Doors Are Open*; the 1967 clip of "The End" from Canadian TV; and *Feast of Friends: Encore*, based around additional footage from the *Feast of Friends* production that's almost as long as *Feast of Friends* itself. The most interesting of these segments show the band in session in the studio.

***Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970*** (Eagle Vision/Bright Midnight, 2017). The Doors only did two concerts with Jim Morrison after this one at the Isle of Wight on August 29, 1970. This huge festival was comparable to Woodstock in size and the scope of its largely all-star roster, but the concert documentary by Murray Lerner, *Message to Love*, did not appear until 1997. Since then, DVDs have been made available of the entire sets of some of the more notable performers, including, a good twenty years after *Message to Love* and 47 years after the actual concert, the Doors. Considering how much material the band had to draw from by this point, it's disappointing that there are only a couple songs postdating their first two albums, "Roadhouse Blues" and the only truly unusual selection for the set, "Ship of Fools." As good as "Break on Through" and "Light My Fire," there are many other live versions. At least this version of "The End" inserts much different improvised-sounding bits, including a little of the blues classic "Crossroads" and meditations on "Across the Sea" and "Away in India." It's nonetheless a historic document, and the band play pretty well. Morrison's singing, interestingly, is fine, although it's been reported with some reason that his voice was seriously fraying by the time they began work on their final album with him a few months later, *L.A. Woman*. It's also fairly good value, as a CD of the audio is packaged together with this DVD on a separate disc.

***Live at the Bowl '68*** (Eagle Vision, 2012). Full-length concert film of the Doors at Hollywood Bowl on July 5, 1968, with extra features in which the surviving Doors and associates talk about the show and their live performances in general. Note that some of the vocals have been snipped in from other concerts because of some microphone failure in the original recording.

***Mr. Mojo Risin': The Story of L.A. Woman*** (Eagle Vision, 2011). Fine documentary on the making of the Doors' last album with Jim Morrison, and the subsequent rapid demise of Morrison. Includes interviews with the three surviving Doors, producer Bruce Botnick, and Elektra Records chief Jac Holzman.

***R-evolution*** (Eagle Vision, 2013). Although this looks like a roundup of odds and ends that mostly didn't fit onto other Doors DVDs, actually this is a very worthwhile, indeed, highly recommended, compilation of TV clips and promotional videos, some unavailable elsewhere. In particular, the *American Bandstand* clip of "The Crystal Ship" is a major discovery, though it's mimed, not live. There are also rare, at least to most fans, TV clips (albeit some mimed) of "Light My Fire," "Break on Through," "People Are Strange," "Hello, I Love You," and "Touch Me," and their mighty controversial, explicit promo film for "The Unknown Soldier." Note that a few of these "music films" are actually videos assembled long after Morrison's death. The bonus features include a fascinating, indeed shocking, previously undocumented discovery: a 1966 Ford training film to which the Doors (minus Morrison) provided the instrumental soundtrack, some of the riffs resembling ones heard in early Doors songs. There's also a 47-minute documentary (*Breaking Through the Lens*) in which all the Doors save Morrison, and some of their associates, offer various comments and perspectives, and even a commentary track in which they provide observations for the music clips occupying the main part of the disc.

***Soundstage Performances*** (Reelin' in the Years, 2002). Fine compilation of three different TV segments from 1967 to 1969. The 1967 clip has just one song, but it's a major document: a complete performance of "The End" on Canadian television in Toronto in 1967. There are also five songs from a Denmark 1968 TV appearance, and then their 1969 program for PBS. The last of these

is particularly interesting as it has some songs they rarely performed live (“Wishful Sinful” and “The Soft Parade”), a serious and fairly insightful group interview, and a notably different version of “Build Me a Woman” than the more familiar one on *Absolutely Live*.

***When You’re Strange: A Film About the Doors*** (Eagle Rock, 2010). Although it’s a little on the melodramatic side, this 90-minute documentary (narrated by Johnny Depp) touches on the essentials of the Doors’ career. A big surprise in the DVD’s bonus section is an interview with Jim Morrison’s father, who otherwise never discussed his son with the media.

#### UNRELEASED MOVIE:

***HWY: An American Pastoral*** (unreleased, 1969). Jim Morrison starred in, produced, wrote, and co-directed this 50-minute film with UCLA film school buddies Frank Lisciandro, Paul Ferrara, and Babe Hill. In common with some other rock superstars who’ve tried to do their own movies (like Neil Young and Bob Dylan), this is convincing evidence that Morrison was actually best at music, despite his apparent wishes to be taken at least as seriously in cinema and poetry. There’s no Doors music in the movie, but the haunting Appalachian folk-flavored soundtrack by Paul and Georgia Ferrara is actually the best thing about the film. Although this has never been made officially available (though some brief excerpts of footage taken during the filming are in the Doors documentary *When You’re Strange*), it’s been up on youtube for quite some time.

#### NOTABLE PEOPLE:

##### The Band:

**Jim Morrison:** Singer and primary (though not sole) lyricist. Born December 8, 1943, Melbourne, Florida; died July 3, 1971, Paris, France.

**Ray Manzarek:** Keyboardist (mostly organ, though sometimes piano); occasional backup singer; very occasional lead singer. Born February 12, 1939, Chicago; died May 20, 2013, Rosenheim, Germany.

**Robby Krieger:** Guitarist and, along with Morrison, primary songwriter for the Doors, though all four Doors split the songwriting credits on most of their compositions. Born January 8, 1946, Los Angeles.

**John Densmore:** Drummer. Born December 1, 1944, Los Angeles.

### **Producers/Engineers/Arrangers:**

**Paul Rothschild:** Producer of all of their studio albums with Jim Morrison, except for the final one, *L.A. Woman*. Also produced many other notable folk and rock acts during his career, most famously Janis Joplin.

**Bruce Botnick:** Engineer for all of their studio albums with Jim Morrison, and co-producer (with the band) of *L.A. Woman*.

**Paul Harris:** Did the controversial orchestral arrangements on four songs on *The Soft Parade* (as well as the B-side “Who Scared You”). As a session man, played keyboards on many 1960s and 1970s albums, including recordings by B.B. King, Nick Drake, Eric Andersen, Stephen Stills, and John Sebastian.

### **Session musicians:**

**Larry Knechtel:** Plays bass on four songs on *The Doors* (“Twentieth Century Fox,” “Light My Fire,” “I Looked at You,” and “Take As It As Comes”). As a keyboardist and bassist in the elite group of Los Angeles session musicians known as the Wrecking Crew, Knechtel played on a great deal of Los Angeles rock records in the 1960s, including discs by the Mamas & the Papas, the Beach Boys, the Monkees, Simon & Garfunkel, and Elvis Presley. From 1971 to 1973, he was in the popular soft rock group Bread.

**Douglas Lubahn:** Plays bass on most tracks on *Strange Days* and *Waiting for the Sun*, and on three tracks of *The Soft Parade*. Has recalled turning down offer to join as a full-time member during the *Strange Days* sessions, in part because he wanted to stay in Clear Light, another psychedelic group signed to Elektra and produced by

Paul Rothchild. Clear Light issued just one album before breaking up.

**Kerry Magness:** Plays bass on “The Unknown Soldier.” He was in the obscure late-’60s group Bodine, who issued a self-titled LP in 1969.

**Leroy Vinnegar:** Plays acoustic bass on “Spanish Caravan.” Primarily a jazz musician, he played as a sideman on records by many jazz notables, including Chet Baker, Stan Getz, Lionel Hampton, Art Pepper, and Jimmy Smith. He also plays on Van Morrison’s 1972 album *Saint Dominic’s Preview*.

**Curtis Amy:** He only plays on one Doors track, but it’s a very notable and audible contribution: the saxophone solo in the final part of “Touch Me.” Mostly a jazz musician, he’s also heard on Carole King’s huge hit album *Tapestry*. His wife was soul singer Merry Clayton, most famous as the guest singer on the Rolling Stones’ “Gimme Shelter.”

**Harvey Brooks:** Plays bass on most of *The Soft Parade*. Played as a session man on Bob Dylan’s *Highway 61 Revisited* and had been in the soul-rock-psychedelic band the Electric Flag.

**Jimmy Buchanan:** Plays fiddle on “Runnin’ Blue.”

**Jesse McReynolds:** Plays mandolin on “Runnin’ Blue.” Although not well known to rock fans, McReynolds was a bluegrass star as half of the long-lived duo Jim and Jesse, with his brother Jim McReynolds.

**Reinol Andino:** Plays conga on *The Soft Parade*. Also plays on records of the late 1960s and early 1970s by Mama Cass, Brewer and Shipley, Nick Gravenites, and John Sebastian.

**Champ Webb:** Plays English horn on “Wishful Sinful.” Had played on albums by Ella Fitzgerald, Hugo Montenegro (of “The Good, The Bad & the Ugly” fame), and Rod McKuen.

**George Bohanan (also spelled as George Bohanon):** Plays trombone on *The Soft Parade*. Would later play on albums by James

Taylor, Carole King, Bonnie Raitt, and Marvin Gaye.

**Lonnie Mack:** Plays bass on “Roadhouse Blues” and “Maggie M’Gill” on the *Morrison Hotel* album. Unlike most of the session musicians on Doors records, Mack was a pretty well known artist in his own right, though more as a sharp blues-rock guitarist than a bassist. His 1963 instrumental version of Chuck Berry’s “Memphis” was a #5 hit single, and he had his only other Top Thirty hit that year with “Wham!” In the late 1960s and early 1970s, like the Doors, he recorded for Elektra.

**Ray Neapolitan:** Plays bass on most of *Morrison Hotel*. Not much is known about or has been written about him, considering the extent of his contribution.

**John Sebastian:** In the mid-1960s, John Sebastian was one of the most creative and commercially successful folk-rockers as the main singer and songwriter of the Lovin’ Spoonful. He’d started a solo career by the time he played harmonica on “Roadhouse Blues,” under the pseudonym G. Puglese. He also guested with the band onstage at a few 1970 concerts.

**Jerry Scheff:** Plays bass on all but one track on *L.A. Woman*. A session musician on many records of the 1960s and 1970s, he’s most known for playing bass in Elvis Presley’s live band in the late 1960s and 1970s.

**Marc Benno:** Plays rhythm guitar on four songs on *L.A. Woman*. Had been in the Asylum Choir, a late-’60s group most noted for featuring Leon Russell before Russell had solo success.

### **Early Doors semi-members:**

**Rick & the Ravens:** Ray Manzarek’s pre-Doors group, also including his brothers Rick and Jim. Recorded three obscure singles for the Aura label.

**Rick Manzarek:** Guitarist in Rick and the Ravens, brother Ray Manzarek’s pre-Doors band. Plays on the September 1965 demos that were the Doors’ first recordings.

**Jim Manzarek:** Harmonica player in Rick and the Ravens, brother Ray Manzarek's pre-Doors band. Plays on the September 1965 demos that were the Doors' first recordings.

**Patty Sullivan:** Bassist on the Doors' September 1965 demos, from band Patty and the Esquires. Never a member of the band, only playing bass to help them out on their demos.

### **Notable Musical Friends and Associates:**

**Paul Beaver:** Electronic musician who, with Bernie Krause, was vital to marketing and popularizing the Moog synthesizer. Helped hook up the Moog for its use on "Strange Days."

**Kevin Coyne:** It's been reported that Coyne, then a singer-songwriter with the obscure British group Siren, was approached to replace Jim Morrison in the Doors shortly after Morrison's death. Coyne told the instructor this in an interview about 25 years later. Siren were on a label (Dandelion) distributed by Elektra, which might have fostered the connection. It's difficult to imagine Coyne's idiosyncratic, gruffly harsh voice or similarly odd bluesy angst-ridden songs fitting in with the Doors. If this was proposed, nothing came of it, Coyne going on to a lengthy career as a solo artist with a considerable cult following (though mostly in the UK and Europe).

**John Haeny:** Recorded the spoken word poetry performances of Jim Morrison used on the *An American Prayer* album, and co-produced that record. As an engineer, worked on many records by artists on Elektra and other labels, including Love, Judy Collins, and Nico. In the 1970s, worked as engineer on albums by Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, and Warren Zevon.

**Jimi Hendrix:** Sometime in 1968, Morrison participated in one of Hendrix's numerous live jam sessions at the Scene club. Like many such superstar jams, what you hear on the disc doesn't live up what you imagine it might have been like. Morrison's contributions are largely drunken, obscenity-laden shouting. This has nonetheless been issued many times on bootlegs and semi-official discs.

**Jefferson Airplane:** Played shows with the Doors during their 1968 European tour. Like the Doors, although already enormously successful in North America, the Airplane weren't nearly as well known in the UK and Europe, and indeed wouldn't sell nearly as many records as the Doors there.

**Janis Joplin:** Although the date is indefinite, Paul Rothchild said that he introduced Joplin and Morrison, arguably the two most charismatic and controversial stars in psychedelic rock, to each other at a Los Angeles party in the late 1960s. The encounter didn't end well, some accounts having it that Joplin hit Morrison over the head with a bottle.

**Larry Marks:** Was introduced to the Doors as their producer during the brief time they were signed to Columbia Records, but never produced sessions by them (and, indeed, the Doors didn't record any sessions for Columbia). Most noted as producer of subsequent albums by folk-rock-protest singer-songwriter Phil Ochs and Lee Michaels.

**Love:** Jim Morrison cited this mid-1960s Los Angeles folk-rock-psychedelic band as one of his favorites, and main Love singer-songwriter Arthur Lee recommended the Doors to Elektra Records chief Jac Holzman. Despite great popularity in Los Angeles and a strong cult following throughout the world to this day, Love never approached the success of the Doors, in part because of the unwillingness of Lee to tour.

**Van Morrison:** Before starting his hugely successful and still-going solo career, Morrison was lead singer of the Belfast group Them, who were an influence on the Doors with their excellent, penetratingly moody mid-'60s blues-rock records. Them were among the most famous groups the Doors supported during their lengthy residency at the Whisky A Go Go in 1966, sharing the bill for about two weeks starting in June. On the final night, the two bands played together, both Van Morrison and Jim Morrison sharing the same stage, the set including a long version of the Them classic "Gloria."

**Nico:** One of several women to have affairs with Jim Morrison

without getting him to leave Pamela Courson. When they met in 1967, she was already semi-famous as a model, and actress (most notably in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* and Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls*), occasional singer with the Velvet Underground (though she was fired in spring 1967), and beginning a career as a solo singer. The most important outcome of their brief relationship was Morrison's encouragement to Nico to write her own songs, advising her to take inspiration from her dreams, as he did for his own material. Nico subsequently recorded several albums of original if highly uncommercial gothic, experimental singer-songwriter music, and has a cult following to this day.

**Nattie Peña:** Early Doors fan, and filmmaker/photographer friend of Morrison's from UCLA, who made the May 1966 audience recordings of the band at the London Fog issued in 2016. Five pictures of the group she took that night are included with the *London Fog 1966* release.

**Iggy Pop:** It's been reported that Pop, notorious as a volatile controversial onstage performer and recording artist both with his band the Stooges (in the late 1960s and early 1970s) and then as a solo artist, was considered as a replacement for Jim Morrison after Morrison's death. If anyone was to replace Morrison, this made some sense, in part because of Pop's image, and also because he was a Doors fan whose band, the Stooges, put out their first two albums on the Doors' label, Elektra. The dates and circumstances are vague enough to cast doubt on whether this happened or how seriously such a move was weighed.

**The Velvet Underground:** It's been suggested, though not confirmed, that Morrison based some of his act and wardrobe around the leather-suited whip-dancing of one of the dancers who was part of the Velvet Underground's stage show, Gerard Malanga. A statement in the narration of the 1995 television documentary *Rock & Roll* that Jim Morrison was inspired to start writing songs after attending one of the Velvet Underground's shows in San Francisco is inaccurate, however. For one thing, he'd been writing songs since at least the time he first sang "Moonlight Drive" to Ray Manzarek in mid-1965, almost a year before the Velvet Underground first played San Francisco. For another, the Doors had already started their

Whisky A Go Go residency when the Velvets played in San Francisco. In an interview with instructor of this course, Ray Manzarek confirmed the Velvet Underground did not influence the Doors.

#### **BUSINESS ASSOCIATES:**

**Sal Bonafede:** Co-manager of the Doors in their early years, with Asher Dann. The Doors broke with them, it's been reported, after they tried to get Jim Morrison to go solo.

**Asher Dann:** Co-manager of the Doors in their early years, with Asher Dann. The Doors broke with them, it's been reported, after they tried to get Jim Morrison to go solo.

**Ronnie Haran:** Successfully lobbied for the Doors to become the house band at the Whisky A Go Go in spring 1966, just as their time at the London Fog was coming to an end.

**Bill Harvey:** Art director at Elektra Records.

**Jac Holzman:** Founder and head of Elektra Records, the Doors' label. Responsible for signing them in mid-1966 when they were without a label following their brief, record-less association with Columbia.

**Billy James:** Signed the Doors to Columbia Records in late 1965. Despite his genuine belief in and passion for the band, they did not record anything for the label before getting dropped after five months. James subsequently did work for the Doors in his position as a publicist for Elektra Records.

**Bobby Neuwirth:** Most known as an acerbic sidekick/quasi-roadie for Bob Dylan in the mid-1960s. Worked for a while as a minder of sorts for Jim Morrison in the late 1960s, supposedly to curb his worst excesses and keep him out of too much trouble.

**Clive Selwood:** General manager of Elektra's UK office, who helped with the Doors' 1968 UK tour. That in itself wouldn't be too interesting, but Selwood is one of several people who's claimed some credit for the idea of editing down "Light My Fire" into a

shorter version for a single.

**Bill Siddons:** Managed the Doors from 1968 to 1972, after being a roadie for the group. He got the job although he was only nineteen, in part because the band felt they could trust him, certainly much more than their previous managers Sal Bonafede and Asher Dann. Most known in the Doors saga for being the representative of the band who flew to Paris to help with the details of Jim Morrison's burial, though he never saw Morrison's body.

**Vince Treanor:** Roadie and soundman for the Doors.

**Elmer Valentine:** Owner of the Whisky A Go Go, who apparently fired the Doors several times during their 1966 residency. They finally pushed him too far on August 21, when they first did their explicit version of "The End." They were fired for good the next day, though by that time they weren't as bothered by the loss as they would have been earlier, since they were signed to Elektra and starting to record their first album that month.

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS/FILMMAKERS:

**Joel Brodsky:** Photographer for the distinctive covers of the Doors' first two albums, *The Doors* and *Strange Days*, and the less distinctive small one on *The Soft Parade*. Also took numerous other photos for LP covers, including for fellow Elektra artists the MC5 and the Stooges, as well as for Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks*.

**Henry Diltz:** Photographer for the iconic cover of the *Morrison Hotel* album. After starting as a folk musician with the Modern Folk Quartet, Diltz pursued photography as a career, also taking cover pictures for well known albums like Crosby, Stills & Nash's debut; James Taylor's *Sweet Baby James*; and several Eagles LPs.

**Paul Ferrara:** Photographer for the front cover of *Waiting for the Sun*; worked on photography and design of the 1969 Doors documentary *Feast of Friends*; and co-director of the unreleased 1969 Jim Morrison film *HWY: An American Pastoral*. Also photographed Morrison often. Writes about his time with the Doors in *Flash of Eden*, a memoir that's not especially recommended. In

part that's because the majority of it covers other aspects of his life. Additionally, the text is peppered with boast-ish tales of numerous sexual experiences and his feeling that the three Doors other than Morrison weren't fully cognizant of Jim's artistry, pressuring him to do what they wanted so they could maintain their commercial success.

**Wendell Hamick:** Took cover photo for *L.A. Woman*, for which Morrison deliberately slouched lower than the other Doors, as if to shy away from his image as dominant frontman.

**Babe Hill:** Another UCLA film friend of Morrison, and another co-director of *HWY: An American Pastoral*.

**Frank Lisciandro:** UCLA film chum of Morrison who edited *Feast of Friends* and was a co-director of *HWY: An American Pastoral*. Also took the back cover photo of *Absolutely Live*. Co-produced *An American Prayer*.

**Peter Schaumann:** Did the illustrations of the Doors on the inside of *The Soft Parade's* gatefold cover. Did several other such illustrations for other late-'60s albums, including LPs by Love, Renaissance, and Joe Byrd & the Field Hippies.

**Guy Webster:** Took the back cover photograph for *Waiting for the Sun*. Webster took many famous rock LP covers, including for albums by the Rolling Stones, Simon & Garfunkel, the Mamas & the Papas, Love, Judy Collins, Phil Ochs, the Byrds, Nico, and Carole King. Some can be seen in his book *Big Shots*, which has brief but fairly interesting text about his career and some of the artists he photographed.

## JOURNALISTS:

**Dave Diamond:** As a DJ on Los Angeles radio station KFWB, probably the biggest supporter of the Doors on radio before "Light My Fire" was a hit. Took the unconventional step of playing the nearly seven-minute album version on AM radio, a medium that did not encourage either the playing of long tracks or the airing of non-LP tracks. Was instrumental in convincing the band to release a

shorter version as a single.

**Joan Didion:** Celebrated writer and journalist wrote one of the most famous stories about the Doors, though not one of the best, for a March 1968 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. That story's notable, however, for including first-hand accounts of the Doors in the studio working on *Waiting for the Sun*, which Didion was able to view. These are interesting for capturing the other Doors' personal nonchalance, at least in Didion's presence, toward Jim Morrison.

**Ben Fong-Torres:** Longtime Bay Area-based writer, primarily on rock and popular music, since the late 1960s. An editor for *Rolling Stone* in the late 1960s and 1970s. Holds the distinction of doing the last interview with Jim Morrison, conducted on March 12, 1971 for *Rolling Stone*.

**Richard Goldstein:** One of the first serious rock critics, writing for the *Village Voice* and the *New York Times*, among other publications. An early champion of the Doors, and interviewer/presenter of the band for their 1969 television appearance on the PBS New York program *Critique*.

**Jerry Hopkins:** Another of the first serious rock journalists, and among the first to write serious books about rock. Interviewed Morrison twice in the late 1960s, the second time for a long *Rolling Stone* interview in 1969. Co-author of the best-selling Morrison biography *No One Here Gets Out Alive*.

**Gloria Stavers:** Editor of the teen magazine *16*. Took some of the most famous photos of Jim Morrison, particularly the shirtless ones in 1967 that have been on numerous book and album covers.

**Danny Sugerman:** As a young teenager, Sugerman worked for the Doors, answering their fan mail. He was able to make friends with Jim Morrison, who acted like a big brother of sorts. After Morrison's death, took over management of the Doors, a position he held for quite a while. Is most famous, however, as the co-author of *No One Here Gets Out Alive*, adding personal color to the original text by Jerry Hopkins, which had been rejected by numerous publishers for years.

## LOVERS:

**Linda Ashcroft:** Wrote about her on-off affair with Morrison in her memoir *Wild Child: Life with Jim Morrison*, though she is not referred to as one of his chief companions (or referred to much at all) in other Doors literature.

**Pamela Courson:** For about the last five years of Jim Morrison's life, his primary girlfriend, although he had numerous other lovers, and she had some others too. Although they had a stormy relationship, her position as his chief soulmate and muse has generally been unquestioned. While she often identified herself as Morrison's wife, and she was named as heir to his estate (eventually divided between Morrison and Courson's families), she and Morrison were never married. Died of a heroin overdose on April 25, 1974, aged 27.

**Dorothy Fujikawa:** Ray Manzarek's wife, whom he met at UCLA in the early 1960s and married on December 21, 1967, with Jim Morrison and Pamela Courson as witnesses. In contrast to Morrison and Courson, Manzarek and Fujikawa had a long-lived and stable relationship, remaining married until Ray's death in 2013. Fujikawa has prominent roles in Manzarek's UCLA student films.

**Judy Huddleston:** Although Morrison had numerous lovers and a few affairs, just three wrote books about him. Huddleston is one. He doesn't come off too well in *Love Him Madly: An Intimate Memoir of Jim Morrison*, which generally isn't too interesting or enlightening.

**Patricia Kennealy:** Rock journalist who befriended, and then become romantically involved with, Jim Morrison. "Married" Morrison in an unofficial witchcraft ceremony on June 24, 1970 that might have been taken more seriously by Kennealy than Morrison. Became pregnant by Morrison, but decided to have an abortion. Her lengthy memoir *Strange Days: My Life With and Without Jim Morrison* is rambling, not too easy to read, and not recommended.

**Tandy Martin:** Jim Morrison's high-school girlfriend in

Alexandria, Virginia.

**Julia Negrón:** Married John Densmore in the late 1960s. Left him after Morrison's death in the early 1970s for the Allman Brothers' bass player, Berry Oakley, who died in a motorcycle accident in 1972.

**Lynn Veres:** Go-go dancer who met the Doors at Ondine in New York in 1967, and married Robby Krieger in 1972. Was the inspiration for "Love Her Madly."

**Mary Werbelow:** Dancer and Jim Morrison's most serious girlfriend before Pamela Courson.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

**Tom Baker:** Actor who appeared with Nico in the 1967 film *I, A Man*, a role Nico had hoped Jim Morrison might play. Had a brief affair with Pamela Courson and became a good friend of Morrison. Caused a lot of trouble for him when he got drunk on a plane flight with Jim in late 1969, his antics almost leading to a jail sentence for the singer.

**Max Fink:** Flamboyant attorney for Jim Morrison at his trial for charges stemming from his Miami concert, which he defended with only partial success.

**The Living Theatre:** Experimental theater company whose confrontational, audience-interactive performances Morrison attended in Los Angeles in February 1969. These were an influence on his own increasingly audience-baiting performances, particularly the Miami concert that got him into so much trouble.

**Michael McClure:** Renowned Beat poet became a good friend of Morrison in the late 1960s, and encouraged Jim to publish his poetry.

**Terence McWilliams:** Young prosecuting attorney at the trial for Morrison's behavior at the 1969 Miami concert.

**George Stephen Morrison:** Jim Morrison's father, who rose through the US navy ranks to become an admiral. His tense relationship with his father and nomadic Navy family upbringing was probably a big influence on Jim's rebellious and anti-authoritarian nature. Jim does not seem to have seen his parents after the mid-'60s, and seldom otherwise communicated with them.

### **MOST NOTABLE DOORS CONCERTS:**

**Circa early March-early May, 1966, at the London Fog, Los Angeles:** Aside from a few scattered appearances in late 1965 and early 1966 at private parties and school dances, these seem to have been the Doors' first proper shows. They had a near nightly residence at this obscure club on Sunset Strip for about two months, though these shows were generally not well attended, and UCLA friends sometimes comprised most of their audience.

**May 9-August 21, 1966, at the Whisky A Go Go:** The Doors were resident band (though often in support to more well known acts) at this famed Sunset Strip club during these months, though they fit in some shows elsewhere and out of Los Angeles. These were the most important gigs of their career, as they were the most crucial in building their local following and growing their onstage confidence and repertoire. Some of their August 1966 shows were attended by Elektra Records boss Jac Holzman and Elektra producer Paul Rothchild, leading directly to their deal with Elektra and the beginning of the recording sessions for their first album shortly afterward.

**November 1-30, 1966, at Ondine in New York:** their month-long residency at this small New York club, a couple months before the release of their first record, helped build both their onstage prowess and their underground following outside of Los Angeles. They played there again from January 19-29, 1967 and March 13-April 2, 1967.

**January 6-8, 13-15, 1967, at the Fillmore in San Francisco:** Their first shows in San Francisco, sharing bills with the Young Rascals, Sopwith Camel, Grateful Dead, and Junior Wells.

**March 7-10, 1967, at the Matrix in San Francisco:** Especially notable because about four CDs' worth of material was recorded during their stint at this small but influential San Francisco club, where many leading Bay Area psychedelic bands played in their early days. Two CDs were later officially issued as *Live at the Matrix '67* after the four CDs had been bootlegged. These are the first decent-quality live recordings of the Doors, and the only ones that predate their first national hit.

**June 10, 1967, at the Fantasy Faire & Magic Festival at Mt. Tamalpais Outdoor Theater:** Although not nearly as big or famous as the Monterey Pop Festival, this smaller one, taking place just a week earlier, had a lineup almost as impressive. The Doors did not appear at Monterey because they weren't invited, though the decision might have been because they were still pretty unknown, and not based on negative opinion about their music.

**June 12-June 15, 1967 and June 19-30, 1967, at Steve Paul's Scene in New York:** As "Light My Fire" was racing to the top of the charts, the Doors played some well received shows at this new and top New York rock club. They returned for some more there in October.

**September 17, 1967 at the Ed Sullivan Theater, New York:** The Doors anger the producer of the *Ed Sullivan Show* when they agree to change the "we couldn't get much higher" lyric in "Light My Fire" to eliminate the word "higher," but perform the original lyric on the program anyway. Morrison maintains, falsely, that he forgot to change the words in the excitement of performing on national television. The Doors are never invited back onto the *Ed Sullivan Show*.

**December 9, 1967 at New Haven Arena in Connecticut:** Morrison gets in his first serious legal trouble when he's arrested onstage for berating police after he's mistakenly maced by an officer backstage before the show.

**March 22-23, 1968, at the Fillmore East, New York:** Concerts at this highly regarded venue, opened by Bill Graham after the success of the Fillmore in San Francisco.

**July 5, 1968, at the Hollywood Bowl:** Perhaps their highest-profile concert, fortunately filmed and recorded, as can be seen and heard on archival releases.

**August 2, 1968, at Singer Bowl in Flushing Meadows, Queens, New York:** Riots at this performance inspired Pete Townshend to write “Sally Simpson” for the Who’s *Tommy*, in which a crowd riots when the Tommy messiah figure takes the stage.

**September 6, 1968, at the Roundhouse, London:** Their highest-profile appearance (on a bill with Jefferson Airplane) during their sole European tour with Morrison, filmed as the basis for the TV documentary *The Doors Are Open*.

**September 15, 1968, at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam:** Morrison is incapacitated by injudicious intake of hashish before this show, which the annoyed Doors perform, apparently successfully, as a trio, with Ray Manzarek taking lead vocals.

**December 4, 1968, at CBS Television City, Los Angeles:** The Doors’ final national television performance is filmed for *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, in which they perform “Wild Child” and (with saxophonist Curtis Amy and the Smothers Brothers Orchestra) “Touch Me.”

**January 24, 1969 at Madison Square Garden, New York:** One of their biggest non-festival crowds, at one of the most famous entertainment venues in the US.

**March 1, 1969, at Dinner Key Auditorium, Miami:** The Doors’ most notorious performance, at which a drunken Morrison gives a chaotic performance and, more importantly, is subsequently charged with indecent exposure and public profanity and drunkenness.

**April 28, 1969, at PBS Studios, New York:** Taping of show for the PBS *Critique* program, combining performances of seven songs with interviews with the Doors.

**June 27-30, 1969, at the Forum, Mexico City:** Besides their 1968 European tour and 1970 Isle of Wight festival set, these mark the only performances of the Doors with Jim Morrison outside of the US and Canada.

**July 21, 1969, at the Aquarius Theater, Hollywood:** These shows were recorded for a possible live album, but material from the performances (as well as from recordings done without an audience at the same venue the following day) wasn't issued until 2001.

**January 18-19, 1970, at the Felt Forum in New York:** Held in a smaller venue within the Madison Square Garden complex, these shows and others in the first half of 1970 were taped for possible use on a live album, excerpts showing up on *Absolutely Live*. Six CDs of performances from the shows were issued in 2009.

**August 29, 1970, at the Isle of Wight Festival:** The Doors' sole European performance with Jim Morrison outside of their 1968 tour was at this massive festival, with several hundred thousand people in attendance. The Woodstock-caliber lineup also featured Jimi Hendrix, Joni Mitchell, Miles Davis, Emerson, Lake & Palmer, the Who, Sly & the Family Stone, the Moody Blues, Jethro Tull, Kris Kristofferson, Donovan, Leonard Cohen, and Joan Baez, among others. The Doors' set was filmed, and is now available (along with an audio CD of the performance) on *Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970*.

**December 11, 1970, at State Fair Music Hall, Dallas:** Their second-to-last performance with Jim Morrison went fairly well, including highlights from their yet-to-be-released *L.A. Woman* album, among them "L.A. Woman," "The Changeling," "Love Her Madly," and possibly "Riders on the Storm." All but the last of those songs can be heard, in low fidelity, on the *Boot Yer Butt!* compilation of live material.

**December 12, 1970 at the Warehouse, New Orleans:** The Doors' last performance with Jim Morrison, unfortunately, was a disaster, the singer losing spirit, smashing the microphone stand into the stage, and walking offstage after a few songs.

## LANDMARKS:

**Highway Between Santa Fe and Albuquerque:** When he was four years old and riding with his parents and grandparents through the desert, around dawn they came across an accident in which several Native Americans were injured and, in Jim Morrison's memory, scattered and bleeding to death on the road. He later claimed that one or two of the spirits of the dying Native Americans entered his soul. The incident is referred to in the spoken lyric in the middle of "Peace Frog": "Indians scattered on dawn's highway bleeding/Ghosts crowd the young child's fragile eggshell mind."

**UCLA Film School:** Still considered one of the top university film programs in the world (officially as part of the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television). This is where Jim Morrison and Ray Manzarek first met as film students in 1964.

**14 Westminster Avenue, Venice, California:** In the apartment of friend Dennis Jakob in summer 1965, Morrison slept on the rooftop and got some inspiration for his first songs while taking LSD and looking over the Venice rooftops (i.e. the "gazing on a city under television skies" in "My Eyes Have Seen You").

**Venice Beach:** Where Morrison and Manzarek met by chance in summer 1965, deciding to form a band after Morrison sang "Moonlight Drive."

**Ray Manzarek apartment, 14 Fraser Avenue, Venice:** Morrison moved in with Ray Manzarek and his girlfriend Dorothy in this apartment a block from Venice Beach, soon after he and Ray decided to form a group. I can't find the address and maybe it's not there anymore, but after this, Manzarek found a single-room place on the beach in Venice where the Doors rehearsed in their early days.

**Third Street Meditation Center, Los Angeles:** Where Manzarek met John Densmore in the summer of 1965, leading Ray to invite John to join the band that became the Doors.

**World Pacific Jazz Studios, Los Angeles:** Where the Doors—before Robby Krieger joined—taped a half-dozen demos, their first recordings, on September 2, 1965, with Ray’s brother Jim on harmonica, Ray’s brother Rick on guitar, and pickup bass player Patty Sullivan.

**Olivia’s, 2615 Main Street, Venice:** Soul food restaurant where Morrison often ate, and part of the inspiration for “Soul Kitchen.”

**Alta Cienega Motel, 1005 N. La Cienega Boulevard, West Hollywood:** Although Morrison did live in some apartments with Pamela Courson, often he lived in this modest hotel, room 32 being his favorite. He also sometimes stayed at the nearby Tropicana Hotel on 8585 Santa Monica Boulevard.

**Sunset Sound Recorders, 6650 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood:** Studio where the Doors recorded *The Doors* and *Strange Days*.

**8171 Sunset Boulevard:** Where the billboard advertising the Doors’ first album was placed. This marked the first time a record was advertised with a billboard on Sunset Strip.

**“Love Street” house, 8021 Rothdell Trail, Laurel Canyon:** For a while, Jim Morrison and Pamela Courson lived in this house near the Laurel Canyon Country Store, whose location served as the inspiration for “Love Street.”

**TTG Studios, 1441 N. McCadden Place, Hollywood:** Studio where the Doors recorded *Waiting for the Sun*.

**Elektra Sound Recorders, 962 La Cienega Boulevard, West Hollywood:** Studio where the Doors recorded *The Soft Parade* and *Morrison Hotel*.

**Morrison Hotel, 1246 South Hope Street, downtown Los Angeles:** Skid row-standard hotel in whose window the Doors were photographed by Henry Diltz for the cover of *Morrison Hotel* on December 17, 1969.

**The Doors Workshop, 8512 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood:** The Doors used this building for their offices from 1968 and 1972. Of more note, they rehearsed in the lower level, calling it the Doors Workshop. They recorded *L.A. Woman* in the workshop.

**Village Recorder Studios, 1616 Butler Avenue, Los Angeles:** Studio where Morrison recorded poetry on December 8, 1970 (his 27<sup>th</sup> and final birthday), some of which was later used for *An American Prayer*.

**17 Rue Beautrellis, Paris:** Apartment building in which Morrison died, on the fourth floor, on July 3, 1971.

**Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris:** Cemetery in which Jim Morrison was buried in July 1971, shortly after his death. His grave is one of the most visited sites in Paris. The cemetery is also the final resting place of many other celebrities, including Edith Piaf, Chopin, and Oscar Wilde.

#### **ALBUMS INFLUENTIAL ON OR INFLUENCED BY THE DOORS:**

**The Animals, *Absolute Animals 1964-1968*** (Raven, 2003). The Doors, especially Ray Manzarek, counted the more blues-oriented and keyboards-oriented British Invasion bands among their biggest influences. The finest R&B-oriented British band from outside London, this Newcastle combo was most distinguished by Eric Burdon's soulful vocals and a far greater reliance on organ than the usual British Invasion guitars. Most known for their electrification of the folk standard "House of the Rising Sun," which is here along almost a dozen other mid-'60s hits, as well as some psychedelic hits Burdon sang with a different Animals lineup in the late '60s.

**The Beach Boys, *Greatest Hits Vol. 1 & 2*** (Capitol, 1999). While little if any Beach Boys influence can be heard in the Doors' music, Jim Morrison did cite them as one of his favorite groups (along with the Kinks and Love) in the official Elektra Records biography he filled out before the release of their first album. Maybe there's a subtle influence in how both bands drew upon the Southern California experience for much of their material, though in

very different ways. For what it's worth, Brian Wilson once said, "I like the Doors' music and I thought Jim Morrison was a great singer. When I heard that Jim said something nice about me, I thought 'it's a mutual admiration society!'" Although these Beach Boys compilations miss a few of their more notable songs (including their first single, "Surfin'"), these two twenty-song CDs contain virtually all of their 1960s hits and most famous non-hits. They span both their surf/hot rod-oriented pre-1965 material and their more mature sound of the last half of the 1960s.

**Paul Butterfield Blues Band, *The Paul Butterfield Blues Band*** (Elektra, 1965) and ***East-West*** (Elektra, 1966). Like the Butterfield Blues Band, the Doors did quite a few blues-rock songs (though far more often live than in the studio), though Butterfield was much better at it. However, Elektra's release of their first two albums—the first all-out electric band albums the label issued—could have helped the Doors decide to sign with the company, as they demonstrated Elektra could work with album-oriented electric groups with integrity. The Doors did New Orleans soul singer Lee Dorsey's "Get Out of My Life, Woman" live in their early days, and it's possible they were influenced to do so by Butterfield's band, who put the song on their second album, *East-West*. The title track of that LP was a 13-minute long raga-rock instrumental, perhaps influencing the Doors' creations of similar pieces a la "The End."

**John Coltrane, *My Favorite Things*** (Atlantic, 1961). There were probably a lot of jazz albums, and several by Coltrane, that influenced the Doors. This one was selected for this list because Ray Manzarek has specifically cited Coltrane's drastic, lengthy rearrangement of the famous Rodgers-Hammerstein standard "My Favorite Things" as part of the inspiration for the lengthy instrumental break in "Light My Fire."

**Bob Dylan, *Greatest Hits*** (Columbia, 1967). While Jim Morrison, and the Doors in general, admired Dylan, there's little if any specific influences he had on their music. Like many rock musicians in the mid-1960s, however, they were influenced by Dylan to make their lyrics more ambitious and poetic, though the Doors were arguably the first major American band to do so that weren't from a folk or folk-rock background, as Dylan was. Even when limited to pre-1967

recordings, it's hard to boil down the oeuvre of such an influential figure to just ten songs. This compilation does have his biggest hits from that period, though, such as "Like a Rolling Stone," "Just Like a Woman," and "I Want You," as well as pre-rock acoustic folk tracks that became extremely famous, like "Blowin' in the Wind" and "The Times They Are A-Changin'."

**John Lee Hooker, *The Legendary Modern Recordings 1948-1954*** (Flair/Virgin, 1993). Just as numerous jazz artists and records could be cited as influences on the Doors, so could numerous blues artists and records. One such singer was John Lee Hooker, who has the distinction of being the original performer and co-writer of one of the few covers the Doors put on their studio albums, "Crawling King Snake" (from *L.A. Woman*). They also did it live from their early days, as its presence on *Live at the Matrix '67* demonstrates. Hooker recorded for a lot of labels during his lengthy career. But this has the most seminal side of this pioneer of moody, stomping, electric boogie-blues, including "Crawling King Snake" and his million-selling 1951 hit "I'm in the Mood."

**Howlin' Wolf, *His Best*** (MCA/Chess, 1997). Major Chicago bluesman (by way of Memphis) whose penetrating vocals, harmonica, and guitar work (often by sideman Hubert Sumlin) were major influences on '60s blues-rock groups. The Doors weren't the best at mixing blues and rock, but Wolf's "Back Door Man" was one of their best attempts at doing so, and is one of the few covers on their studio albums, leading off side two of their debut LP.

**The Kinks, *The Singles Collection*** (Sanctuary, 2004). Morrison cited the Kinks as one of his favorite bands in his initial Elektra press bio. The Kinks influence is most famous and prominent, indeed notorious, on "Hello, I Love You," whose central riff is similar to the one featured in the early Kinks classic "All Day and All of the Night." Some echoes of the Kinks' riffs can be heard in other Doors material, such as "My Eyes Have Seen You," and is more audible on their rudimentary September 1965 demos than it would be on their studio records. All of the Kinks' 1964-70 hits (together with some flops) are on this compilation, documenting the peak of a band that progressed from the riff-driven proto-hard rock of "You Really Got Me" and "All Day and All of the Night" to the distinctly British

satirical social commentary of “Sunny Afternoon,” “Dedicated Follower of Fashion,” “Well Respected Man,” “Waterloo Sunset,” and “Lola.”

**Lotte Lenya, *Lotte Lenya Sings Kurt Weill*** (Columbia, 1955). German composer Kurt Weill’s wife Lotte Lenya did the first and best known recording of “Alabama Song,” which set words by author Bertholt Brecht to music, back in 1930. She made several re-recordings of the song, including one on this compilation of her Weill interpretations, the first to make them widely available on LP in the US.

**Love, *Love*** (Elektra, 1966). Love were cited as one of Morrison’s favorite bands in his early press bio. They were early inspirations to all of the Doors, in part because Love were so big in Los Angeles, on the same Sunset Strip circuit the Doors were entering. Love also recorded for Elektra Records, and Love’s leader, Arthur Lee, recommended the Doors to Elektra’s Jac Holzman. There’s too much derivative recycling of Byrds riffs on this debut to qualify it as a great album. But it’s good, including as it does such class folk-rockers as “Mushroom Clouds,” “Signed D.C.,” “A Message to Pretty,” and “Softly to Me,” as well as their garage rock classic “My Little Red Book.”

**Love, *Love Story 1966-1972*** (Rhino, 1995). A double-CD compilation that includes everything from their 1967 album *Forever Changes*, most (but not everything) from *Love* (“Mushroom Clouds” is a notable absentee), and all of the good material from the band’s second album, *Da Capo*, which is great music though it’s less strongly folk-rock-based than the other recordings by the group’s first incarnation. The post-1967 material, on most of which Lee was the only remaining member from their first three LPs, is a bore, though. Love’s music wasn’t too similar to the Doors, and maybe they were more an inspiration as an example of an innovative Sunset Strip band who had success doing their own music than for their style. It’s possible their use of strings and horns on their classic (though not too high-selling) *Forever Changes* influenced the Doors to try the same thing on *The Soft Parade*.

**The Music Machine, *The Best of the Music Machine*** (Rhino, 1984). There weren't many bands that sounded like the Doors at around the time the band emerged. The Music Machine, most known for their 1966 hit "Talk Talk" (and also based in Los Angeles), might have come closest, relying as they often did on ominous minor-keyed melodies, spooky organ riffs, and cryptic lyrics. The similarities in the band's styles seem coincidental, but though the Music Machine weren't as good as the Doors (a high bar to match), they were very good, not just a one-shot band. This is a superb 14-track distillation of this Los Angeles garage-psychedelic band's best tracks, including their best singles, and some of the better cuts from their more obscure late-'60s sessions. It didn't make the transition to CD, however, and this LP is becoming hard to find. Other groups whose moody guitar-organ sound had some similarities to the Doors' might include the Strawberry Alarm Clock ("Incense and Peppermints") and Iron Butterfly ("In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida"), though neither of those bands either came close to matching the Doors in quality, or produced other songs as memorable as their sole big hits.

**Phantom, *Phantom's Divine Comedy Part 1*** (Capitol, 1974). At a time when the Jim Morrison cult, and speculation about his death, was still rather embryonic, this peculiar album was sometimes rumored to feature Morrison as singer. The vocalist does sound like Morrison, though hardly so exactly similar as to be mistaken for him. Similarly, the material and arrangements are Doors-influenced, though the songs aren't within light years of the Doors' compositions, and they're in more of a sluggish mid-'70s hard rock style. They were actually a Detroit group previously known as Walpurgis, and this album was almost certainly crafted to lead listeners into suspecting it might be Morrison singing under the ghost-suggestive pseudonym the Phantom.

**Elvis Presley, *Elvis at Sun*** (BMG, 2004). Jim Morrison was a big Elvis Presley fan, and the Doors did "Mystery Train" (covered by Elvis on a 1955 single) in concert, as well as (not too well) a bit of "Heartbreak Hotel." Both sides of all five of the singles Elvis Presley did for Sun records in 1954 and 1955, including "Mystery Train," are here, along with some outtakes. These were the recordings that, more than other, gave birth to rockabilly. Though they predate his rise to international superstardom in 1956, many critics consider

these his finest recordings, and some consider them the very finest in all of rock'n'roll.

**Elvis Presley, *Elvis' Golden Records*** (RCA, 1958). There are many Presley albums and compilations, but this one contains the biggest and most essential of his hits from 1956 and 1957, including "Hound Dog," "Heartbreak Hotel," "Don't Be Cruel," "All Shook Up," and "Jailhouse Rock." Morrison and the Doors undoubtedly heard post-1957 hits by Elvis too, but his early work was his greatest and most influential.

**The Rolling Stones, *Hot Rocks 1964-1971*** (ABKCO, 1972). The Rolling Stones were one of the Doors' biggest early influences, though at the risk of hammering the point home too often, they didn't do blues-rock nearly as well as the Stones did. They did, however, perform a few of the same blues-rock songs the Stones covered in concert, including Howlin' Wolf's "Little Red Rooster," Chuck Berry's "Carol," and "Money." It's likely Jim Morrison was influenced by Mick Jagger's aggressive, surly vocal style and stage presence, as many other rock singers of the era were. Morrison listened repeatedly to a test pressing of the Stones' 1971 album *Sticky Fingers* days before his death. The song selection on this double-disc best-of covering the Stones' prime is predictable to some extent, but every track is a classic, whether hits like "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" or standout album tracks like "Under My Thumb."

**Buffy Sainte-Marie, *The Best of Buffy Sainte-Marie*** (Vanguard, 1970). Sainte-Marie was a major figure of the 1960s folk scene with her distinctive wavering voice and hard-hitting social protest songs, balanced by some romantic ones like her most famous composition, "Until It's Time For You to Go." She had no audible influence on the Doors, but it's interesting that Morrison was apparently a big fan, spending much of the day playing her albums when he visited French journalist Hervé Muller in Paris shortly before his death. This 24-song survey of her early work includes most of the songs she's most famous for (and that were frequently covered, by folk-rockers and others): "Codine," "Universal Soldier," "Until It's Time for You to Go," "My Country 'Tis Of Thy People You're Dying," and "Now That the Buffalo's Gone."

Plus there's her most concentrated effort to crack the folk-rock singles market, a cover of Joni Mitchell's "The Circle Game."

**Ravi Shankar, *Ragas & Talas*** (Angel/World Pacific, 1964). Indian ragas were definitely an influence on the Doors, most audibly on "The End." It's likely they were exposed to a good number of Indian musicians and records, and this one was chosen as it's by the most famous Indian performer, sitar player Ravi Shankar. It happens to have been issued in the US by World Pacific, the same label for which Ray Manzarek's pre-Doors band, Rick & the Ravens, did a few singles (on the World Pacific subsidiary Aura).

**Frank Sinatra, *Best of the Best*** (Capitol, 2011). Sinatra was certainly an influence on, and admired by, Jim Morrison, as you can hear many times on Morrison's more crooned vocals, such as on the softer sections of "Touch Me." Sinatra did many records, and this one features some of his most popular recordings of the 1950s and 1960s for Capitol and Reprise on disc one. Disc two is a live 1957 concert.

**Them, *The Complete Them 1964-1967*** (Exile/Legacy, 2015). The Doors supported Them at the Whisky A Go Go in June 1966, and jammed with them onstage once. But also, their use of organ in a hard-nosed R&B/rock British Invasion setting was influential on the Doors, most notably on the intro to "Break on Through," which is very similar to the intro and rhythm used in Them's early track "One Two Brown Eyes." Their commercial success was largely limited to the hit singles "Here Comes the Night," "Baby Please Don't Go," and "Mystic Eyes," but Belfast's Them were one of the greatest British Invasion bands. In addition to featuring a young, snarling Van Morrison on lead vocals, they played vicious R&B/rock with gnarly guitar and haunting organ, whether playing Morrison's songs or covering American blues, soul, and rock tunes. This three-CD compilation has virtually everything they did, and has little filler, with concise and insightful liner notes by Morrison himself.

**Muddy Waters, *His Best, 1947 to 1955*** (MCA/Chess, 1997). The best of the most influential Chicago bluesman in his first decade at Chess Records includes several songs covered by blues-rock bands, like "I Just Want to Make Love to You," "I'm Your Hoochie

Coochie Man,” and “Rollin’ Stone,” the last of which gave the Rolling Stones their name. As for his influence on the Doors, it was likely biggest on Ray Manzarek. The only two Doors tracks released during Morrison’s lifetime with Ray on lead vocals, “Close to You” (on *Absolutely Live*) and “You Need Meat (Don’t Go No Further)” (on the B-side of “Love Her Madly”), were both Muddy Waters covers.

**The Who, *Tommy*** (Universal, 1969). Still the most famous rock opera of all time, vaulting the Who into international superstar status. The story is frankly a little murky and hard to follow, but continued Pete Townshend’s investigations of identity, abnormality, and the relationship between heroic artists and their audience, bolstered by catchy songs like “Pinball Wizard,” “I’m Free,” and “We’re Not Gonna Take It.” As previously noted, one of the lesser known songs, “Sally Simpson,” was inspired by the riot at an August 2, 1968 show at Singer Bowl in Flushing Meadows, Queens, New York, at which the Doors and the Who were on the same bill.

**The Yardbirds, *Ultimate!*** (Rhino, 2001). No other band did more to innovate rock guitar in the 1960s, and few other than the Beatles were more futuristic and experimental, not only in their guitar work but in their incorporation of improvisation, “rave-up” tempos building to crescendos, electronic distortion, and haunting Eastern melodies and instrumentation. Perhaps their guitarists (Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, and Jimmy Page, not all in the band at the same time) weren’t such a big influence on the Doors, but the use of Eastern and Indian melodies and electronic distortion, and general hunger for experimentation, certainly were. It’s slightly uneven and missing a few outstanding tracks, but this two-CD compilation covers almost all of the major bases of the group that did much to pioneer both blues-rock and psychedelia. The lineups featuring guitarists Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, and Jimmy Page are all represented, as are their big hits “For Your Love,” “Heart Full of Soul,” “I’m a Man,” “Shapes of Things,” and “Over Under Sideways Down.”

**The Zombies, *The Singles Collection: A’s & B’s, 1964-1969*** (Big Beat, 2000). Another British band that prominently used electric keyboards, though unlike the Animals and Them, they were pop-rock-based rather than blues-based. Certainly their use of moody minor melodies must have been noticed by the Doors, and

keyboardist Rod Argent's use of spooky electric keyboards and jazzy solos (as on their big hit "She's Not There") noticed by Ray Manzarek in particular. This single-disc 28-track collection has their big hits "She's Not There," "Tell Her No," and "Time of the Season," as well as many excellent non-hit singles.