

# Creativity, Alcohol and Drug Abuse: The Pop Icon Jim Morrison

Rainer M. Holm-Hadulla

Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany; Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile

© S. Karger AG, Basel

**PROOF Copy  
for personal  
use only**

ANY DISTRIBUTION OF THIS  
ARTICLE WITHOUT WRITTEN  
CONSENT FROM S. KARGER  
AG, BASEL IS A VIOLATION  
OF THE COPYRIGHT.

## Key Words

Psychopathology · Alcohol · Drug abuse · Depression · Creativity · Jim Morrison

## Abstract

**Background:** Alcohol and drug abuse is frequent among performers and pop musicians. Many of them hope that alcohol and drugs will enhance their creativity. Scientific studies are scarce and conclusions limited for methodological reasons. Furthermore, extraordinary creativity can hardly be grasped by empirical-statistical methods. Thus, ideographic studies are necessary to learn from extraordinarily creative persons about the relationship of creativity with alcohol and drugs. The pop icon Jim Morrison can serve as an exemplary case to investigate the interrelation between alcohol and drug abuse and creativity. **Methods:** Morrison's self-assessments in his works and letters as well as the descriptions by others are analyzed under the perspective of creativity research. **Results:** In the lyrics of Jim Morrison and in biographical descriptions, we can see how Jim Morrison tried to cope with traumatic events, depressive moods and uncontrolled impulses through creative activities. His talent, skill and motivation to write creatively were independent from taking alcohol and drugs. He used alcohol and drugs to transgress restrictive social norms, to broaden his perceptions and to reinforce his struggle for self-actualization. In short, his motivation to create something new and authentic was rein-

forced by alcohol and drugs. More important was the influence of a supportive group that enabled Morrison's talents to flourish. However, soon the frequent use of high doses of alcohol and drugs weakened his capacity to realize creative motivation. **Conclusions:** Jim Morrison is an exemplary case showing that heavy drinking and the abuse of LSD, mescaline and amphetamines damages the capacity to realize creative motivation. Jim Morrison is typical of creative personalities like Amy Winehouse, Janis Joplin, Brian Jones and Jimmy Hendrix who burn their creativity in early adulthood through alcohol and drugs. We suppose that the sacrificial ritual of their decay offers some benefits for the excited spectators. One of these is the illusion that alcohol and drugs can lead to authenticity and creativity.

© 2013 S. Karger AG, Basel

## Introduction

'All games contain the idea of death' (Jim Morrison, 1969) [1].

The hope that alcohol and drugs inspire creativity has existed for thousands of years [2] and, since ancient times, it has been asked whether eminent creative people are more productive in states of ecstasy and even madness [2, 3]. Scientifically, it seems evident that only certain forms of bipolar disorders are associated with eminent creativity [4, 5]. With respect to alcohol and drug abuse, it ap-

KARGER

© 2013 S. Karger AG, Basel  
0254-4962/13/0000-0000\$38.00/0

E-Mail karger@karger.com  
www.karger.com/psp

Rainer M. Holm-Hadulla  
Heidelberg University  
Gartenstrasse 2 (Uni-Altzentrum)  
DE-69115 Heidelberg (Germany)  
E-Mail rainer.holm-hadulla@stw.uni-heidelberg.de

pears that performing artists and jazz and pop musicians consume more alcohol and drugs than the average population [6]. The mortality of pop stars due to alcohol and drug abuse is higher than in the average population [7].

The question arises whether alcohol and drugs can enhance creativity in special creative domains. A publication entitled *Jazz and Substance Abuse: Road to Creative Genius or Pathway to Premature Death* by Tolson and Cuyjet [8] concludes that certain artists can remain creative in spite of substance addiction. Lapp et al. [9] showed that alcohol had no pharmacological effect on the creative combinations that subjects produced. However, the novelty of solutions was enhanced when the subjects thought they had consumed alcohol, whether or not that was the case. This result is consistent with the findings of Sternberg [10] that the decision to be creative enhances creativity. Hicks et al. [11] showed in a psychopharmacological study that participants performed better on a divergent thinking task if they expected alcohol to enhance creativity. The same interaction did not influence performance on measures unrelated to creative problem solving. However, the stimulating effect may have been produced also by other substances, e.g. herbal tea, if expected to happen. Another study [12] showed that moderate alcohol intoxication (0.075%) led to better results in the Remote Associations Test (RAT). Zausner [13] hypothesizes that artistic disequilibrium and chaos are useful for bringing forth new order. He thinks that the heightened sensitivity of chaotic systems can lead to substance abuse and misguided searches for pseudocreative chaos. Thus, creative chaos becomes an illusion rather than leading to creative achievements. On the other hand, from ancient times until today, there is a firm belief in creative chaos. Nietzsche [14] summarized this belief with the following words: 'You must still have some chaos within yourself to give birth to a dancing star'. From an interdisciplinary perspective, emotional and cognitive chaos leads only to creative achievements if it is brought into coherent and usable forms [15]. In order to answer the question of whether alcohol use is a help or a hindrance for creativity, Ludwig [6] investigated the biographies of 34 well-known, heavy-drinking, 20th-century writers, artists or composers/performers. Alcohol use proved detrimental to creative productivity in over 75% of the sample. The detrimental effects increased by time and by higher doses of alcohol. The few people of the sample who claimed that alcohol facilitated the creative process suffered from manic-depressive disorders. Mostly, heavy drinking appeared as part of a bohemian, artistic lifestyle. When vulnerable individuals incorporated high doses of alcohol

into their daily routines it damaged their creativity. These results can also be generalized in the abuse of other psychoactive substances, although there is no simple and invariant relationship between alcohol use and creativity. In particular, there are no studies available that differentiate the influence of alcohol and drugs on the different psychological conditions of creativity, i.e. talent, knowledge and skills, motivation, personality traits and environment. Furthermore, it is not clear in which phase of the creative process – preparation, incubation, illumination, realization and verification – that alcohol and drugs could reinforce creative activities and what kind of doses, duration and pattern of substance use is harmful.

## Methods

Eminent creative processes cannot be investigated by statistical means because of the impossibility (1) to find controls and (2) to detect when the tested person is in a creative state. Furthermore, the complex interactions between the use of alcohol and drugs with the psychological fundamentals of creativity – talent, skills/knowledge, motivation, personality traits and environmental conditions [10, 15–17] – are difficult to test statistically. Thus, the biographical and ideographic analysis seems indispensable to investigate the interrelation between the use of alcohol and drugs and creativity [18, 19]. This being the case, it may be helpful to analyze how one of the greatest pop stars of the 20th century used alcohol and drugs to reinforce his creativity. The 'empirical basis' resides in Morrison's poems, songs and interviews, as well as the reports of his family, friends, colleagues and biographers. In a hermeneutic circle characterized by the interplay of author and reader, and the interrelation of actuality and historicity [20], the questions at issue can be expected to become more transparent. Retrospective historical analysis has its methodological pitfalls as well as its advantages, and these are enlarged upon by Gadamer [20]. One of the major advantages of historical reflection is learning from eminent creative figures [18].

## Results

Jim Morrison is admired as one of the greatest rock musicians to this very day. He was born in 1943 in Florida when the USA was in the midst of World War II. His mother was described by his biographers as an attractive and always busy person [21–23]. The mentioned biographers document the fact that she punished her son mostly by withdrawal of love and instilling shame and guilt which seemed to be hurtful for the little child. Later she had as little understanding as his father of the creative and rebellious sides of her son. The relationship with his father in Jim's early childhood was characterized by ab-

sence. At his birth his father was on flight training and a short time later reassigned to fight for the Japanese-occupied islands in the Pacific. In 1964, at a time when Jim Morrison turned completely away from the traditional values of his home, his father was the commander of the aircraft carrier from which the first aircraft attacks on North Vietnam started. He always spoke negatively about the artistic talent of his son, and only 10 years after his death found some words of appreciation for his son's achievements [22]. He survived his son by 47 years.

Jim Morrison's second given name, Douglas, was chosen in honor of General Douglas MacArthur. From an early age, the parents seemed to favor a military career for Jim. During the war his father was mostly on duty and Jim and his mother lived with the parents of his father. At this time he is described as a sensitive child.

Morrison repeatedly described a dramatic childhood event as the crucial experience of his life. At about the age of 4, shortly after the birth of his sister, Ann, he was riding in a car with his family. A heavy storm began and his father woke him up to show him the powerful and frightening clouds. Then, they witnessed a terrible car accident. A truck with Indian workers had collided with another car on the highway and on the street Indian lay workers bleeding to death. Jim Morrison wrote later that it was the first time that he had come into contact with death, and that this event was to accompany him throughout his life. In his poem and song *Dawn's Highway*, he describes his recurring memory as follows: 'Indians, scattered on dawn's highway bleeding/Ghosts crowded the young child's fragile eggshell mind'. For Morrison, this event was of great psychological reality and is probably a condensation of terrifying experiences and early-childhood anxieties. Morrison tried to cope with these experiences and anxieties by engaging in creative activities such as fantasizing, reading and poetic writing. Beyond that, Morrison identified himself with the victims; he later danced like Indian shamans and sometimes believed himself to be possessed by their spirit. In his poems and songs, he expressed distressing moods and described traumatic experiences, for example in the song *Strange Days*: 'Strange days have found us/Strange days have tracked us down/They're going to destroy/Our casual joys...'. In this song, he also describes a deep loneliness: 'Strange eyes fill strange rooms.../And through their strange hours we linger alone/Bodies confused/Memories misused/As we run from the day to a strange night of stone'. In these lines, narrating self and narrated self should not be equated. But, as in patients' narratives, Morrison frequently emphasized that his narratives were

authentic expressions of his feelings and ideas. In this respect it is a hermeneutic task between author and reader, as between patient and therapist, to create meaning [20].

Jim Morrison was 6 years old when his brother, Andy, was born and he entered school. At that time he was described as phlegmatic, shy and reserved. His brother recollects Jim's emotional distance, reluctance and resentment against his sister and himself [21–23]. At high-school Jim began to read challenging literature like Plutarch, Nietzsche, Kafka, Kerouac, Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti. Jim's senior-year English teacher reports that he read as much and probably more than any student in class [21]. Throughout high-school he maintained nearly a 90-grade average and his IQ was tested at 149. He scored above the national average in mathematics and much higher in verbal skills [21]. Thus, talent and knowledge in literary forms were apparent before he began using alcohol and drugs. Also, a strong motivation to write creatively became paramount, which was by no means influenced by alcohol and drugs. Early in his high school years he copied authors like Kafka and began to write little poems. He is said to have stated that whatever one needs in life is to be found in books and expressed later that only words should survive his existence [21]. However, concerning creative personality traits like resilience, it became apparent that he could hardly cope with frustration and reacted with rejection, denial and undisciplined behavior. This distinguishes him from one of his main antipodes, Mick Jagger, who in times of rebellion remained a disciplined student and sportsman [24]. Also, the environmental conditions were more favorable for Jagger. He was constantly supported by his mother and a close relationship with his father outlasted his most rebellious phases. In contrast, the creative efforts of Jim were rejected and his strive for authenticity was disdained by his parents. At the end of high school Jim was torn between vulnerable openness and aggressive rudeness. He felt so vulnerable that he developed a peculiar interest in reptiles, admiring their resistance. He later came to call himself the 'Lizard King'. In an interview, he said that if a species had a chance to survive the next world war or total poisoning of the planet, this would be the reptiles [22]. Maybe Jim Morrison projected onto archaic reptiles an idea of consistency and durability, the lack of which he felt so painfully. In Nietzsche, Blake, Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Kerouac, he found words for a new world view and morality that could replace the values of his parents and the familial bonds which he experienced as crippling. Later, he began drinking to reinforce his separation from traditional values and underline an alternative lifestyle.



After graduation in September 1961, he went to St. Petersburg JC, Florida, near the place where his grandparents lived. His grandmother recalled that Jim ‘hated conformity, he’d always get some queer slant on things .... He’d tried to shock us .... We just didn’t understand him, any of us’ [22, p. 28]. His grades were unspectacular, but he excelled in writing essays, which were mostly concerned with the dark sides of existence. One essay ended: ‘We are drifting in blind orbits, helpless, alone’ [22, p. 29]. Jim wrote soberly and was not into heavy steady drinking. Occasional booze served to assist him to transgress openly the social norms of his ambience, with sexual provocations and mocking assaults on his roommates. His main courses at college consisted of skepticism and revolt against philosophic tradition, mainly Nietzsche. Another focal point was the psychology of crowds. Mediated by the book *Life against Death: the Psychoanalytic Meaning of History* by Norman O. Brown [25], he found Freud’s concepts of human destructiveness convincing and followed the view that people either learn to control their unconscious impulses or are doomed to destruction. On one of his visits he was rejected by his mother, who did not allow him to enter the house until he got a haircut. After this rejection his drinking bouts became more frequent and once he was arrested because of public drunkenness. At college, however, he remained sober and dazzled his professors by his originality. There is no indication that he wrote under the influence of alcohol and other drugs [21–23], but at hard-drinking parties with some older students and professors he found some recognition he was desperately looking for.

Against the firm and devaluating opposition of his parents, Jim moved to Los Angeles in early 1964 to continue his studies at the UCLA Film School. A short time after this step, Steve Morrison disinherited his son and cut ties with his son completely. For Jim his move to California was a key step towards ‘absolute’ freedom: ‘Tried to run, tried to hide/Break on through to the other side’, as he would sing a little later. He continued his intense reading and kept contact with his girlfriend by phone. Calls lasted for hours till she appeared in Los Angeles going, to Jim’s dismay, her own way. Following Nietzsche’s concept of the Dionysian, he increasingly seemed to idealize drinking bouts as a mode to enact and transcend ‘pure primordial pain’. Jim’s obligatory production of a little film incensed most of his professors, and he was told that he deserved the worst grade and was marked down as a troublemaker [21]. The producer Stanton Kaye saw in Jim ‘a profound nihilism, a sense of despair that was stronger than my own ...’ [21, p. 49].

The last time Jim saw his parents was at Christmas 1964 when his father spent a brief vacation after his participation as commander of the aircraft carrier that started the war in Vietnam. Returning to the UCLA campus, Jim got drunk, showed up yelling and shouting, covered walls with graffiti and climbed one of the campus towers, stripping and throwing his clothes to the ground. The film Jim produced for examination was even rejected by the instructor who had formerly admired him. He told Jim that he was ‘terribly disappointed’ [21, p. 52]. Jim was given a complementary grade D and seemed to be deeply hurt by the rejection.

After these defeats Jim left UCLA and led a bohemian life in Venice Beach, Los Angeles. He began smoking marijuana and used other drugs, predominantly LSD. His girlfriend Mary retreated from him, remarking that taking drugs might be dangerous and destructive [21, p. 52], but Jim began to believe that his creativity could be reinforced by alcohol and drugs. Most of his poems were written before this time and were later published with the title *The Lords: Notes on Vision*. These poems never got recognition comparable to the songs that would make Jim Morrison and The Doors famous. In the summer of 1965 Jim wrote a few poems that would be the basis for some of his songs. This is the only time in his life where drugs might have influenced his creativity positively, but we do not know whether these texts were written under the influence of alcohol and drugs or created in sober times. Alcohol and drugs certainly served to reinforce his alternative lifestyle and striving for authenticity. The lyrics written in the summer of 1965 were fragmentary and only gained an artistically coherent shape after he met Ray Manzarek in August 1965. The keyboarder Ray Manzarek, who was 4 years older than Jim, was described as ‘organized’, ‘mature’ and ‘able to accept responsibility’ [21, p. 61]. He discovered the poetic power of Jim’s texts and inspired him to sing. During the joint session they elaborated the fragmentary texts. A little later they founded the rock group The Doors. His artistic friends gave him the recognition, support and structure that enabled him to realize his inspirations. Consequently, Morrison always underlined that it was not he who created the songs but the group. Brief periods of sobriety led to wonderful songs that fascinate up to today. In comparison with Mick Jagger, it is apparent that both needed creative partnership. For Jagger it was firstly Keith Richards, whom he met at the age of 14. They found mutual resonance for their creative intentions but also a disciplinary framework in which they elaborated their inspirations [25, 26]. Later The Rolling Stones became a resonance board for Mick,

as The Doors were for Jim. Mick Jagger used alcohol and drugs to enhance pleasure but not creativity. He desperately fought against the drug abuse of Brian Jones and referred Keith Richards more than once for antidrug treatment to prevent the destruction of their creativity.

Within a few months The Doors created the lyrics and music that would make them famous. The name of the group is an allusion to Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*, in which the hope of expanding consciousness by psychedelic drugs was described. However, it was not alcohol and drugs that brought Morrison's talent to flourish, but rather an artistic environment. It functioned as a sounding board for his inspirations and helped him to abstain from alcohol and drugs in times of creative productivity. Generally, when Morrison was drunk or under the influence of LSD, mescaline or – seldom – heroin, he could not write at all. This was the case in the beginning of his creative efforts, and after his abuse of alcohol increased in 1966 and 1967 his poetic efforts rapidly decreased. In the first month of 1968 his drinking accelerated and alarmed his companions in The Doors. Intoxicated by alcohol, Jim turned mean and inhibited the group's productivity. John Densmore wanted to quit because no artistic work was possible. He, together with the other members of The Doors, Ray Manzarek and Robby Krieger, hired a friend to control the alcohol abuse of Jim. The situation deteriorated, however, and in 1968 there were only a few weeks when The Doors could go on presenting a framework in which Jim could drink moderately and participate in rehearsals. In concerts, the public was excited by his decay. The writer Weintraub described his appearance as follows: 'When he offers to die on the cross for us it's OK because he is Christ' [21, p. 178]. Jim seemed to identify himself with the 'Indians bleeding to death' and the 'unknown soldiers' of whom he spoke of in his songs. In his poetic fragments his favorite theme was death.

His partner Pamela Courson tried to reinforce his intentions to write, but their relationship was soon damaged by alcohol and drugs [21, 27]. Jim frequently lost control under the influence of alcohol and drugs and fought with Pamela. After such outbursts, Morrison often became severely depressed, threatened to commit suicide and drank even more than usual [27]. Soon alcohol and drugs had completely destroyed his creativity. On stage, too, he did not experience any creative flow [21, 22]. Again, this is different to Jagger, whose performances were an elixir of life for him. Only 2 years after his first successes Morrison was already completely 'burned out', as his friends in The Doors report unanimously [21, 22]. This is also visible in recordings of stage performances [28].

After the first album by The Doors released in January 1967, Jim Morrison became one of the most popular rock stars in the USA within a few months. The songs articulated the desire for liberation, excitement and transgression that met the wishes of a great section of his generation to enhance personal self-actualization and social protest. Morrison became an icon of this idealization. As in a sacrificial ritual, the audience participated in his decline. The most famous picture shows him – deliberately staged by the photographer – in a Jesus Christ pose [22]. In the early summer of 1968 he began to show aggressive contempt for his audience and Hopkins and Sugerman [21, p. 183] suppose that this was a 'means of denying himself the mindless misguided approval he was being offered'. He always appeared drunk on stage and often could not sing, provoking a lot of dangerous riots. For millions he had become a highly idealized pop icon incorporating sexual freedom and transgression of restrictive social norms. For others, he was a public threat, obscene and bluntly destructive [22].

He performed some concerts during the late summer 1968, but by the end of the year he was so severely intoxicated that his comrades feared that he was going to die. The publicity of The Doors increased, but Jim was more and more prone to heavy drinking. There were reports of many, many beers and three bottles of cognac a day [21]. During drinking bouts he got into fights with friends and even Pamela, sometimes ending in parasuicidal actions like risky balancing on balustrades. He felt a loss of his creativity and uttered in the beginning of 1969 that he was desperately looking for a new way to develop creatively, but he continued drinking heavily and he sometimes added Benzedrine and cocaine. He hated downers and Pamela had to hide the fact that she took heroin. On stage he was often so drunk that he forgot the lyrics and stumbled on stage. The times became rare in which he could rehearse with his group. They engaged a friend to take care of Jim and to help him to drink less. But the result was that he found a new drinking companion. In an interview he answered in early 1970: 'Getting drunk is, uh ... getting drunk, you're in complete control ... up to a point. It's your choice, every time you take a sip. You have a lot of small choices ... it's like .... I guess it's the difference between suicide and slow capitulation' [21, p. 246]. There were other premonitions of his death. He began having adverse reactions to marihuana, sometimes with paranoid ideations. After Morrison's alcohol and drug abuse had shown its destructiveness, Pamela Courson persuaded him to begin psychiatric treatment, which he

terminated after a single session. The last LP, *L.A. Woman*, was produced in 1970. His producer [29] reported that they created the LP in 6 days and Morrison only drank some beers and avoided surrendering to alcohol and drug excesses. It was the last time that Morrison could work creatively. In the songs there is a wide range of literary topics and musical style elements that still inspire today. Botnick [29] was sure that Morrison's creativity would have led to many further creative achievements if he could have stopped the self-destructive drinking. The photos of the booklet of *L.A. Woman* show a prematurely aged artist drawn by alcohol abuse.

The successful publications of his poems could not reinforce his urgent wish to go on writing poems. When he expressed in an interview in early 1970 that people in art try to 'confirm their own existence' [21, p. 338], he meant himself also, but drinking heavily took away his poetic capacity to 'confirm his own existence' creatively. In the same interview he said that drinking was connected with 'a lot of pressure hanging over me that I couldn't cope with .... But three years ago there was just a wave of hallucinogenics. I don't think that anyone really has the strength to sustain those trips forever. Then you go into narcotics, of which alcohol is one. Instead of trying to think more you try to kill thought – with alcohol and, uh, heroin and downers. These are painkillers ...' [21, p. 338]. He took the death of Jimi Hendrix as another omen of his imminent death and went on drinking heavily and snorting cocaine. He felt lost like the lyrical subject in *Riders on the Storm*. It was reported that he 'went through three bottles of scotch in the course of a meal and afterwards dashed onto Sunset Street to direct traffic with his coat' [21, p. 323]. He also smoked up to three packs of cigarettes a day that served, in addition to alcohol, to destroy his voice and his entire body. While producing *L.A. Woman* his producer thought that he was listening to Jim's final album as a vocalist. In March 1971, Morrison took flight from his disorganized life and moved to Paris. At that time his friends described him as 'very depressed', 'uncontrolled' and 'completely inaccessible'. He intended to find a more productive writing schedule to 'confirm his existence' but passed the time with long walks through the city and consumed alcohol excessively, probably also taking cocaine and heroin. He wanted desperately to write, but he could not. He was frequently drunk and belligerent, and even violent. He lived at the edge of himself, as expressed in a former song: 'I woke up this morning/ got myself a beer/for the future is uncertain/and the end is always near'. Jim Morrison died on July 3, 1971 at the age of just 27 years.

## Discussion

Creativity research differentiates five fundamental conditions of creativity: (1) talent; (2) knowledge/skills; (3) motivation; (4) personality traits, and (5) environment [15, 17, 19]. Seen through this perspective we can summarize that Jim Morrison was a highly intelligent writer, singer and performer. His creative domain was 'words only words' and in this respect his knowledge and skills were extraordinary. He had read intensely demanding literature and mastered a lot of literary forms. He was highly motivated and in poetically shaping his experiences found a central motif for creative activity. There is no indication that these conditions for creativity were promoted by alcohol and drugs. In respect to personality traits his unconventional strive for authenticity was underlined by the use of alcohol and drugs. Sometimes he coped with low tolerance of frustration by alcohol and drugs, but they soon served as 'painkillers' that destroyed his creative energy. Furthermore, alcohol and drugs weakened his resilience to elaborate his inspirations and thereby to 'confirm his existence'. Seen from the perspective of developmental psychopathology, there are hints of maladaptive coping with difficulties in impulse control and maybe coping with bipolar mood swings by alcohol and drug abuse. The joint psychodynamic background of Morrison's strive for creativity and his inclination to self-destruction by alcohol and drug abuse are taken into consideration elsewhere [30]. Referring to the condition of creativity, his environmental conditions were both favorable and unfavorable. He did not receive any positive reinforcement for his creative efforts and achievements from his family, but he was positively recognized by his artistic friends in The Doors. Furthermore, The Doors were a sounding board that helped him to realize his inspirations. In the joint work his fragmentary poems became coherent lyrics. They seemed to gain a higher aesthetic quality than the poetic mood descriptions which he produced in solitude and sometimes under the influence of alcohol and – in very few cases – probably under the influence of LSD. Furthermore, he lived in a time and place where performers of his type were highly admired. He articulated a lot of psychological, social and political topics that were of burning actuality. However, alcohol severely damaged his creative environment. After the first successes his friends could not perform with him any longer and lost emotional and intellectual contact because of his drinking. Also, the relationship with his fiancée and other women was damaged by alcohol and drugs. They could not prevent him from drinking and served as cre-



ative muses. Additionally, the public excitement he aroused in his concerts was not beneficial for his creative achievements: he portrayed himself – and was portrayed – as a sacrifice that drank himself to death.

## Conclusion

There is no indication that alcohol and drugs enhanced Jim Morrison's creativity. In the summer of 1965 – but only for a short period – it cannot be excluded that he could write creatively under the influence of alcohol and

drugs. Out of the poetic fragments of this – and former times – coherent lyrics and songs resulted only after having found the support of his artistic friends in The Doors. After his first successes, however, his alcohol and drug abuse increased and damaged his creative capacities severely within a few months. In this respect, he seems to be typical of artists destroyed by alcohol and drugs like Amy Winehouse, Janis Joplin, Brian Jones and Jimi Hendrix. A wide public attended Jim's decay and we suppose that this sacrificial ritual offered some benefits for the excited spectators. One of these is the illusion that alcohol and drugs can lead to authenticity and creativity.

## References

- Morrison J: *The Lords and the New Creatures*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1969.
- Kerenyi C: *Dionysos: Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Klibansky R, Panofsky E, Saxl F: *Saturn and Melancholy. Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art*. London, Basic books, 1964.
- Akiskal KK, Akiskal HS: In search of Aristotle: temperament human nature, melancholia, creativity and eminence. *J Affect Disord* 2007;100:1–6.
- Runco M, Richards R: *Eminent and Everyday Creativity*. London, Ablex, 1997.
- Ludwig A: Creative achievement and psychopathology: comparison among profession. *Am J Psychother* 1992;46:330–354.
- de Leeuw PW: Death and the pop musician (in Dutch). *Ned Tijdschr Geneesk* 2011; 155:A4419.
- Tolson GH, Cuyjet MJ: Jazz and substance abuse: road to creative genius or pathway to premature death. *Int J Law Psychiatry* 2007; 30:530–538.
- Lapp WM, Collins RL, Izzo CV: On the enhancement of creativity by alcohol: pharmacology or expectation? *Am J Psychol* 1994; 173–206.
- Sternberg RJ: A systems model of leadership. *Am Psychol* 2007;62:34–42.
- Hicks JA, Pedersen SL, Friedman RS, McCarthy DM: Expecting innovation: psychoactive drug primes and the generation of creative solutions. *Exp Clin Psychopharmacol* Aug 2012;19:314–320.
- Jarosz AF, Colflesh GJ, Wiley J: Uncorking the muse: alcohol intoxication facilitates creative problem solving. *Conscious Cogn* 2012; 21:487–493.
- Zausner T: Transcending the self through art: altered states of consciousness and anomalous events during the creative process. *J Conscious Explor Res* 2011;2:993–1005.
- Nietzsche F: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*. Stuttgart, Kröner, 1886.
- Holm-Hadulla RM: The dialectic of creativity: a synthesis of neurobiological, psychological, cultural and practical aspects of the creative process. *Creat Res J* 2013, in press.
- Rothenberg A: Creativity, Mental Health and Alcoholism. *Creat Res J* 1990;3:179–201.
- Csikszentmihalyi M: *Creativity*. New York, Harper Collins, 1996.
- Andreasen N: *The Creating Brain*. New York, Dana Press, 2005.
- Holm-Hadulla RM: *Kreativität – Konzept und Lebensstil*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010.
- Gadamer HG: *Truth and Method*. New York, Crossroad, 1989.
- Hopkins J, Sugerman D: *No One Here Gets Out Alive*. New York, Warner, 1980.
- Riordan J, Prochnicky J: *Break on Through: The Life and Death of Jim Morrison*. New York, William Morrow and Company, 1991.
- DiCillo T: *The Doors: When You're Strange*. Wolf Films, 2010.
- Anderson CH: *Jagger – Unauthorized*. New York, Bantam, 1993.
- Brown NO: *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History*. Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 1959.
- Richards K: *Life*. Little, Brown and Company, 2010.
- Henke J: *The Jim Morrison Scrapbook*. Bellevue, Becker & Mayerl, 2007.
- Stone O: *The Doors (DVD)*. Kinowelt GmbH, 1991.
- Botnick B: *Doors – L.A. Woman (booklet)*. Warner Music, 2007.
- Holm-Hadulla RM: *Kreativität zwischen Schöpfung und Zerstörung*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011.