

Special Collections

Denise Green's *Library of Hope and Dreams*

Denise Green is a Springsteen fan and a research librarian at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. In the summer of 2009, Green set out to discover what scholars had published about Bruce Springsteen and began compiling an online annotated bibliography. She combed electronic databases and indexing services to locate scholarly publications, and found other items by consulting bibliographies in published articles and monographs on Springsteen.

Apart from peer-reviewed articles and publications in academic journals and books, Green identified works of scholarship on Springsteen according to Ernest Boyer's definition: effectively researched publications with clear goals, defined methods, significant results, appropriate rhetorical form, and argumentative critique.¹ At the time of this publication, Green's *Library of Hope and Dreams* resource includes 293 entries: 130 journal articles, 149 book chapters, 6 conference proceedings, 5 monographs, and 3 web publications.

The *Library of Hope and Dreams* bibliography is presented in spreadsheet format that includes standard bibliographic data along with concise annotations. Green has included a number of index fields that will be of particular interest to Springsteen scholars. For each publication, she has listed up to four songs and/or albums that are referenced and provided Library of Congress subject keywords and headings. Informative and occasionally qualitative comments appear in her "Misc" column.

Green intends to further develop her website by creating a separate listing of Springsteen biographies. She has also identified 31 PhD dissertations and master's theses focused on Springsteen, which will also soon be added to her annotated bibliography. Moreover, Green is working in partnership with the Friends of Springsteen Special Collection at Monmouth University (featured in this space in the next issue of *BOSS*) to ensure that all the

¹ See Charles E. Glassick, et al., *Scholarship Assessed* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 25.

scholarly publications on Springsteen she has identified and listed are available in hard copy for researchers.

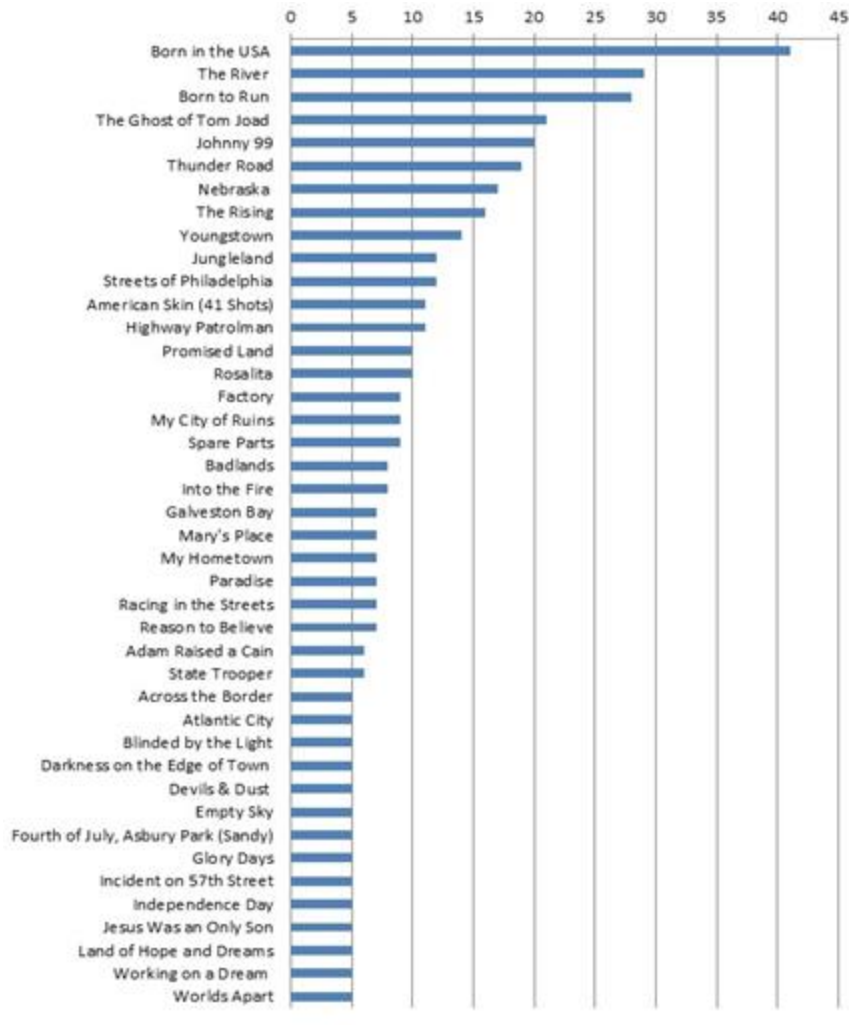
The bar and pie graphs below, produced by Denise Green, show the loci of scholarly attention to Springsteen's works and may be of interest to critics. For example, Green's tabulation in the bar graph reveals that the songs most frequently treated by scholars are largely the title songs of Springsteen's best-selling albums. While the reasons for extensive scholarly interest in the top three songs in particular – "Born in the U.S.A.," "The River," and "Born to Run" – are complex and varied (not the least of which is their early chronology in Springsteen's canon and the fact that they are from his three best-selling studio albums), the fact that six of the top eight songs that have attracted scholarly interest are Springsteen's title songs nonetheless raises some critical questions that are worth exploring. So, too, does the scholarly attention given to the much less commercially successful *Nebraska* and *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, arguably the most literary-influenced of Springsteen's albums and largely solo recordings.

Green's comprehensive and generous bibliographic resource will greatly assist scholars in the growing field of Springsteen Studies. We all owe her a debt of gratitude.

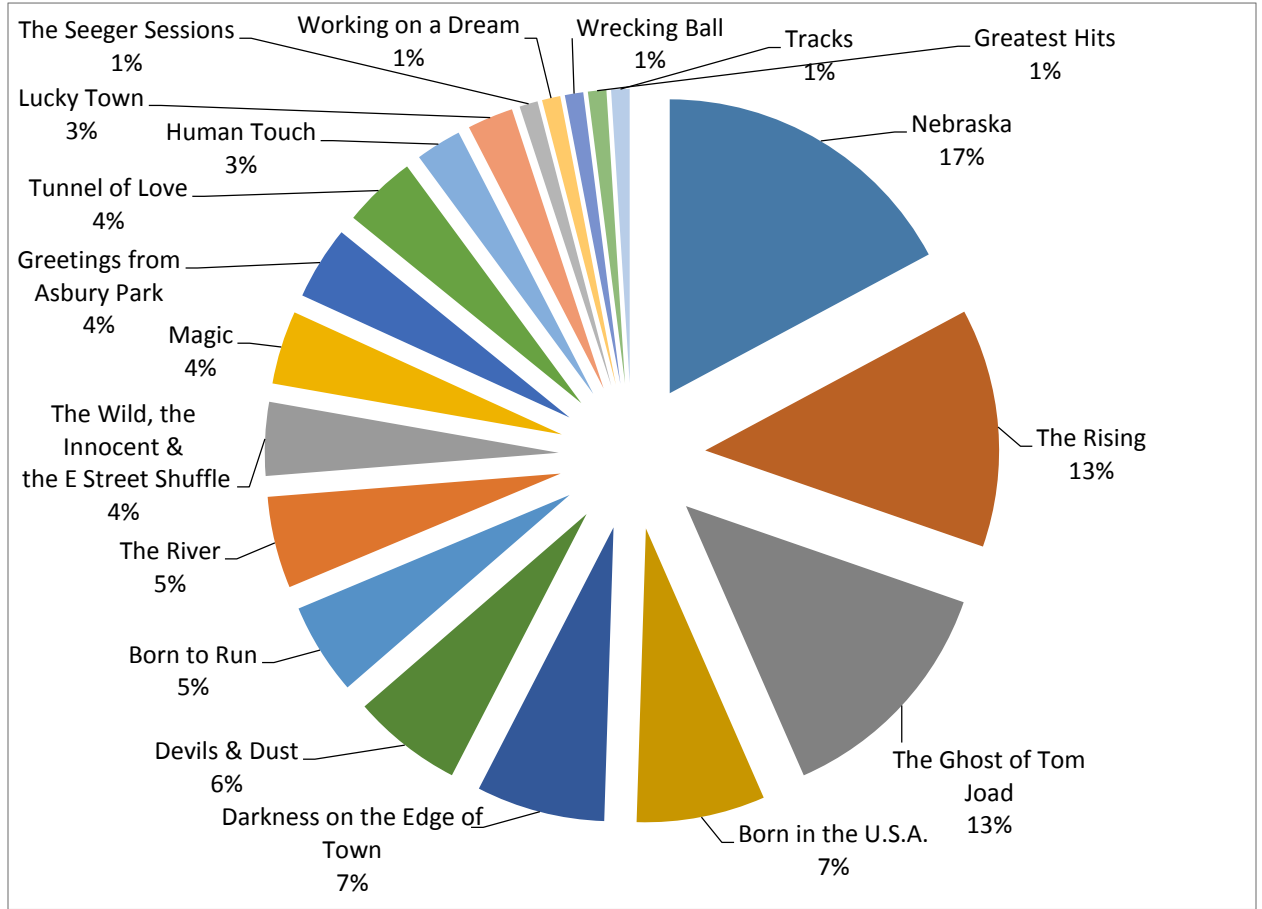
Link to *Library of Hope and Dreams*:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AryS8VV6AntTdEM0V V9pb1JKaWZfT0syWk1wVmFoRkE#gid=0>

Graph 1: 40 Most Popular Songs Among Scholars



Graph 2: Albums by Percentage of Album Studies



Graphs compiled and created by Denise Green.