

Bruce Springsteen – *Born in the USA* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPhWR4d3FJQ>)

[Bruce Springsteen](#), also known as “the Boss”, was born in 1949 in [New Jersey](#), a state with a **gritty**, unglamorous, suburban image compared to the bright lights of neighbouring Manhattan. While generally rich, the state also has a strong working-class reputation which Springsteen captures well in his songs and [heartland rock](#), a genre that focuses on blue-collar (white) workers with elements of [Americana](#) music (based on county, blues, folk, gospel and rock) and basic [rhythm and blues](#).

One of his best-known songs is “[Streets of Philadelphia](#)”, released in 1993 for the film “[Philadelphia](#)” which deals with the stigma faced by a successful lawyer (played by Tom Hanks) who gets AIDS. The song has a strong, **haunting** melody, and showing much compassion for all those left behind by the neoliberal capitalism of corporate America.

“Born in the USA” (1984) is one of Springsteen’s best-known songs. It’s strong, energetic beat and title make it sound like a patriotic anthem. But the lyrics are the exact opposite. The official video starts with workers pouring out of a refinery, and tells the story of a man who had trouble with the law and was sent to Vietnam – to kill the “yellow man”.

Gritty = abrasive, tough (grit=sand, granules/strength, spirit); haunting = recurring, obsessive, unforgettable

<p>Born down in a dead man's town The first kick I took was when I hit the ground You end up like a dog that's been beat too much 'Til you spend half your life just coverin' up</p> <p>Born in the U.S.A I was born in the U.S.A...</p> <p>Got in a little hometown jam So they put a rifle in my hand Sent me off to a foreign land To go and kill the yellow man</p> <p>Born in the U.S.A / I was born in the U.S.A...</p> <p>Come back home to the refinery Hiring man says, "Son if it was up to me" Went down to see my V.A. man He said, "Son, don't you understand"</p> <p>I had a brother at Khe Sanh Fighting off the Viet Cong They're still there, he's all gone He had a woman he loved in Saigon I got a picture of him in her arms now</p> <p>Down in the shadow of the penitentiary Out by the gas fires of the refinery I'm ten years burning down the road Nowhere to run ain't got nowhere to go</p> <p>Born in the U.S.A I was born in the U.S.A. now Born in the U.S.A I'm a long gone Daddy in the U.S.A. now Born in the U.S.A... I'm a cool rockin' Daddy in the U.S.A. now</p>	<p>When I hit the ground = (here) when I was born 'Til you spend half your life just coverin' up = Until you spend half you life just covering up [your pain]</p> <p>Got in a little hometown jam: to get into a jam = to get into trouble (here, in the hometown, with the police probably)</p> <p>Hiring man = the person who recruits “if it was up to me” = if I had the authority</p> <p>V.A. man = veteran affairs man</p> <p>Khe Sanh = a battle in the Vietnam War Viet Cong = pro-communist fighters in South Vietnam</p> <p>Down in the shadow... refinery = living near the prison and the refinery Burning down the road = maybe? Being on the road, not being in any fixed place</p>
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