Why is music so central to the life of the city? Music seems to have a special power to fill urban space with meaning. Through music people feel connected to landscapes, neighborhoods, buildings, and ethnicities. Music gives value to places, and hence helps cement social identities, a process easily seen (heard) in national anthems. This is mostly why the music industry is always desperately trying to chase the new ways music is produced and consumed. Much about the rapid changes in the music industry can be linked directly to changes taking place in the geography of American cities. This course tries to understand how the interplay occurs between sound, place, and questions around social justice, through weekly case studies from many genres. Themes will include the transnational circuits of reggae, the class backgrounds of punk, Motown and civil rights, the togetherness at rave parties, and the sexual ambivalences of Minneapolis’s very own Prince. The course makes use of a large range of media and learning styles.

Wednesday 5.00-7.30  Blegen 140
meets LE theme Diversity and Social Justice in the US
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