This subject examines how the development of the built environment produces and reproduces historical conceptions of race. Using historical and cross-cultural cases involving populations of African descent, the course focuses on the politics of history during projects of nation-building, infrastructure development, and in post-conflict and post-disaster settings. Social theories of race, power, embodiment, and materiality are explored alongside analyses of the erasure and commemoration of heritage in public spaces.

**Required texts**
Karilyn Crockett, *People before Highways: Boston Activists, Urban Planners, and a New Movement for City Making*
Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*
Setha Low, *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place*
Michigan Civil Rights Commission, *The Flint Water Crisis: Systemic Racism through the Lens of Flint*
Keisha-Khan Y. Perry, *Black Women against the Land Grab: The Fight for Racial Justice in Brazil*
Anita Von Schnitzler, *Democracy’s Infrastructure: Techno-Politics & Protest after Apartheid*

**Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following requirements:**

**Reading presentation** (15% of the final grade): Each student will present one or more readings during one class meeting. *Discussants will circulate an outline to all class participants that summarizes and critiques the main points of the readings and provides questions for in-class discussion.* Outlines should be uploaded to Stellar by 1 pm. Bring hard copies to class for each participant. **All students should prepare the readings for each class in the following manner:** Analyze each reading in terms of its argument, research methods, data (evidence marshaled to support the argument), and method of data analysis, theoretical contributions, and conclusions. How does each reading frame its topic? For readings based on fieldwork, is the ethnography convincing? Why or why not? Could the text be improved? How does the writer’s style influence the strength or weakness of the argument?
Class participation (20%). Regular attendance and active participation are essential in this class. If you must be absent, alert the instructor prior to your absence. More than one unexcused absence will affect your final grade. For all absences, students must submit to the instructor by email an essay (600-700-word) analyzing the readings for the day of absence.

Research paper (50%): Each student will complete a 5000-word research paper (not including notes and bibliography) that applies the theoretical and ethnographic analyses studied throughout the course to a particular case study. Papers should present the topic, an overview of the rationale for choosing the topic (from a literature review, a prompt from the readings, or other practical/field experiences), thesis, findings, and conclusions. The findings should also offer an intervention that could be implemented or policy recommendations related to the particular issue. Paper topics and a preliminary bibliography should be uploaded to Stellar in writing on October 5. Use proper citation style in this paper: (author date: page) for in-text citations and in the bibliography. Please use the Chicago Manual Style as a model for your bibliography. Full references should be in the bibliography, not footnotes or endnotes.

Late policy: Extensions on the paper must be arranged at least a day in advance with the instructor. For every day that a paper is late without receiving an extension, the paper will lose 1/3 of a letter grade.

Research paper presentation (15% of the final grade): Students will give a ~10-minute presentations of their final research paper in the last class session.

Topics:
September 7 Course Introduction: Race, Discipline, and Archaeologies of Power

September 13 Theorizing Place, Race, and Space


Setha Low, *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place*, Introduction, Chapter 2 (Genealogies: The Concepts of Space and Place), and Chapter 3 (The Social Production of Space), pp. 1-67.


September 21 Student Holiday – No class
September 28 Race, Bodies, and Space in History


October 5 Race and Infrastructure, Transportation, and Resistance
Guest Speaker: Dr. Karilyn Crockett, Lecturer of Public Policy and Urban Planning, DUSP, MIT
Karilyn Crockett, *People before Highways: Boston Activists, Urban Planners, and a New Movement for City Making*.


Paper topics and a preliminary bibliography should be uploaded to Stellar in writing October 5.

October 12 Infrastructure, Racialization, and Environmental Justice
Guest Speaker: Elena Sobrino, PhD candidate, MIT HASTS Program


October 19  Race, Memorials, and Public History
Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*.


October 26  No Class—Prof. James away at a conference.

November 2  Necropolitics and the Work of the Dead in NYC


November 9  Race, Gender, and Social Justice in Brazil

November 16  No Class—Prof. James at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting

November 23  Thanksgiving Vacation

November 30  Heritage and Infrastructure in South Africa
Anita Von Schnitzler, *Democracy’s Infrastructure: Techno-Politics and Protest after Apartheid*, select chapters.


December 7  Last Class – Final Paper Presentations