In recent years, the visibility of people of color (particularly women) infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in the United States has sparked discussions about the influences of individual and structural factors in how people negotiate risk, protection, mobilization and access to care and medications. This course focuses on AIDS and the way it is represented in scholarly, popular and community discussions. One of our key concerns will be to discuss the role that race thinking has in shaping the representations of communities, the problems, and the solutions identifies. The course explores cultural narratives of the spread of HIV among women and men from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, in addition to debating recent controversies caused by phenomena within the framework of contested social meanings of illness and deviance, or what Paula Treichler has aptly called “an epidemic of signification.” The course also explores linkages between how we imagine and represent illness and already existing notions of racial/ethnic/sexual difference. Discussions of selected moments throughout the crisis will help us understand debates about the meanings of race, from the designation of Haitians as a risk group in the earliest stages of the epidemic to current debates about African Americans makes as AIDS carriers and women of color in the epidemic. Discussions of gender, sexuality and the status of AIDS among African Americans, Latinas/os, Asian Americans and Native Americans will foreground the problematic nature of “culture” and “visibility” in health policy, research and care provision.