Jazz, like the skyscrapers is an event and not a deliberately conceived creation. They represent the forces of today. The jazz is more advanced than the architecture. If architecture were at the point reached by jazz, it would be an incredible spectacle. I repeat: Manhattan is hot jazz in stone and steel. The contemporary renewal has to attach itself to some point. The Negroes have fixed that point through music. Their simple spirit has caused the reformation to spring up from the depths and has situated it in our times. Le Corbusier, When the Cathedrals Were White (emphasis in original text).

Philosophies of human variation remain a fundamental catalyst for subject and social formation in the West. The racial, a formidable tool for determining human difference was mobilized by Europeans to differentiate them from those peoples encountered through colonial expansion in the Americas, Asia, and Africa; through these categories and others the modern world would be discovered, conquered, and known. Over the course of the Enlightenment, the comparative frameworks and methods of categorization of people, things, and processes, such as those formulated by the French Encyclopedists, were critical for the development of Post-Enlightenment ideas of history, rationalism, positivism, and science. In early part of the nineteenth century, for example, theories of typologies in architecture that utilized taxonomic comparison of buildings to determine their most desirable characteristics also parallel the taxonomic logic foundational to mid-century racial science. In either case, these various taxonomies were a means for Man, in the process of becoming a rational being (a citizen, an architect), to conceive and represent his place in the world. With this in mind, one can ask how did the racial influence architectural discourse from the Enlightenment onward? One should also note that racial thinking was productive within the works of modern architects. For Le Corbusier, a racialized “blackness” represented in his When Cathedrals Were White as the syncopated movement of African American lindy hoppers and the regal performance of jazzman Louis Armstrong in Harlem, provided a base material—a Corbusian machine of primal energy—that would fuel the re-generation of his rational Radiant (re: White) City back home in Europe. As a representational tool and one of spatial regulation, how does the racial, a category that mobilizes concepts human difference in service of creating hierarchies of power and inequalities, become a productive means for organizing of the spaces of modernity, i.e. the nation, the society, and the city?

Thinking Race, Reading Architecture will examine the topic of the racial in architecture. The class will closely read primary treatises and manifestos, scholarly essays and books, along with reviewing drawings, models, buildings, and urban plans to trace a genealogy of how concepts of human and racial difference shaped modern architectural discourse and practices. Critical for the seminar will be to understand how and why the racial evolves in western philosophy. These concepts are found in the writings Kant, Hegel, and others from which architectural theory and history derives its conceptual frameworks. The course will also chart a history of the racial in order to understand its presence in the writings and projects of various of architects, theorists, and historians including Thomas Jefferson, Violet Le Duc, Gottfried Semper, Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, and others. One key objective of the seminar will be to understand why the discipline and profession of architecture has been resistant to recognize how the racial has been part of its discursive genealogy. The study of gender and sexuality in architecture will serve as a model for how to interpret the category of the racial in these readings and projects. Over the course of the semester, scholars in architectural history who are undertaking innovative research on the topic will share their work with the seminar.
Readings
All readings are available online at Columbia Courseworks. All books are on reserve in Avery at main desk. E-book indicates that the reading can be found on the E-book database (see Clo). For this course students are expected to have some familiarity with foundational theoretical texts of critical and social theory. Excellent sources for these writings include (also see various resources on-line):

- Critical and Cultural Theory by Dani Cavallaro
- A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory by Michael Payne, Meenakshi Ponnumswami
- Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide by Lois Tyson

Course Requirements
This course is a seminar run as a series of discussions and therefore all students are responsible for completing all reading assignments. Each student will be responsible for contributing one critical question per reading to the weekly discussion.

Analysis Paper - due 03.01.17
You are required to write one short analytical paper—2500 word text + images—in response to the first half of the semester’s themes. All students are expected to be able to write in a clear concise well-developed essay format. This essay should use one or two of the course’s readings to analyze a topic related to the themes of the seminar. This paper should not be a summary of the readings, but instead apply the critical insights to a new object of analysis. The analysis paper is due by midnight 03.01.17 (PDF or MSWord document). Please include visual material, appropriately captioned and cited, to further illustrate your argument.

Remember an analysis is not a summary, but a critical perspective on the readings and an expansion of the authors’ themes. Please consult a writing guide such as the MLA Handbook or the Bedford Writing Handbook for assistance with grammar and structure. All papers must be written in a legible font (typically 10-12pt, Helvetica, Times Roman, or Courier) double-spaced, 1-1.25 inch margins, and paginated. Please include your name and date. Use endnotes or footnotes. All images, quotes or referenced material must include citations formatted according to a writing manual of style (MLA Handbook or Chicago Manual of Style.) This essay will count toward 25% of your grade.

Final Research Presentation and Paper - due 05.05.17
All students are required to make a 30-minute presentation and develop a paper (5000 words + images for PhD students) of their final research. The presentation and paper should take the critical insights on the racial and architecture and expand them into the analysis or comparison of a particular text, theory, building, architect, city, landscape or event. All research should present a clear comprehensible thesis and demonstrate thorough research by utilizing primary sources. During the first week in March each student will meet with the professor to discuss the direction of the research topic. The final presentations will take place on the last 2 classes of the semester. The final research paper will be due by midnight 05.05.17 via e-mail (PDF or MSWord document) no later than 6pm. This final research paper will count toward 75% of your grade.

Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria: strong thesis; clear, logical, and original argument; critical and creative analysis of theoretical texts and visual material; serious effort, preparation, and engagement in the subject matter. Please consult a writing guide such as the MLA Guide or the Bedford Writing Handbook for assistance with grammar and structure. All papers must be written in a legible font (typically 10-12pt, Helvetica, Times Roman, or Courier) double-spaced, 1-1.25 inch margins, and paginated. Use endnotes or footnotes. All images, quotes or referenced material must include citations formatted according to a writing manual of style (MLA or Chicago Manual of Style.)

Readings

WEEK 1 – 18.01.17
Is the formation racial difference relevant to architecture and architectural discourse?

WEEK 2 – 25.01.17
How is the racial aestheticized?

WEEK 3 – 01.02.17
How does racial difference produce Man?

WEEK 4 – 08.02.17
How is reason productive of racial difference?
WEEK 5 – 15.02.17
When does racial take its modern formation?

WEEK 6 – 22.02.17
How is Empire productive of racial difference?

WEEK 7 – 01.03.17 – ANALYSIS PAPER DUE
TBD

WEEK 8 – 08.03.17
How is racial difference productive within Modernism?
- - - - - - "The Racial Epistemology of the Semperian Construction." Unpublished paper.

WEEK 9 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

WEEK 10 – 22.03.17
What is Modernism’s racialized surfaced?

WEEK 11 – 29.03.17
How is the racial embedded within postwar consumer culture?
Harris, Dianne. Little White Houses, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

WEEK 12 – 05.04.17
TBD

WEEK 13 – 05.12.17 – Research Presentations

WEEK 14 – 05.19.17 – Research Presentations

WEEK 15 – NO CLASS [Final Reviews GSAPP]

FINAL PAPER DUE – 05.05.17

Bibliography
- - - - - - Gender Trouble-Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. London: Routledge, 1990.