

# ***SPATIAL ILLITERACIES***

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Graduate Student Symposium  
In conjunction with the Roth-Symonds lecture

Keynote Speaker: Professor Loïc Wacquant  
University of California, Berkeley &  
Centre de Sociologie Européenne, Paris

Yale School of Architecture  
March 27-28, 2009

## **Call for Papers**

The symposium, *Spatial Illiteracies*, engages the increasingly complex relationship between space and communication within the discipline of architecture. While greater public access, upward social mobility and democratization—in short, expanded literacy—have been attributed to advancements in communication, the symposium recognizes that the interplay between space and communication can also produce new forms of illiteracy: points of disjuncture where communication breaks down (**miscommunication**); complex exclusionary structures, which reproduce power relations (**manipulation**); or spatial design and planning that is restricted by failure to take advantage of available knowledge (**missed opportunities**).

Beyond identifying examples that exhibit degrees of illiteracy, the symposium seeks to introduce spatial strategies capable of overcoming these limitations, promoting progress and understanding. Contributions are sought from a wide range of disciplines. *Spatial Illiteracies* will bring together efforts from the fields of architecture, art history, sociology, law, history, human rights, media studies, international relations, and political science.

Participants are encouraged to explore the different aspects of Spatial Illiteracy through the three primary themes mentioned above:

**Miscommunication**—among others, the following issues may be addressed:

- Spatial design and use of space that lead to or promote miscommunication;
- Attempts and approaches in the resolution of miscommunication through spatial design.

**Manipulation**—among others, the following issues may be addressed:

- Intentional or unintentional spatial design that promotes specific detrimental patterns of behavior;
- Spatial design that intentionally or unintentionally establishes vulnerability within a certain population.

**Missed Opportunities**—among others, the following issues may be addressed:

- Spatial design that creates paucity of growth within an environment by limiting opportunities and options;
- Ignorance or lack of vision that results in a limited scope of possible spatial outcomes.

The symposium will open with a keynote address by **Professor Loïc Wacquant**, a Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Researcher at the Centre de

Sociologie Européenne in Paris. Wacquant is a past member of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University and a MacArthur Foundation Fellow. He is the author of over one hundred scholarly articles, and his books have been translated in a dozen languages. His interests span urban marginality, embodiment, the penal state, ethnoracial domination, and social theory. His recent books include *Body and Soul: Notebooks of An Apprentice Boxer* (2004), *The Mystery of Ministry: Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics* (2005), *Das Janusgesicht des Ghettos* (2006), *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality* (2008), and *Punishing the Poor: The New Government of Social Insecurity* (Duke University Press, 2009). He is a co-founder and editor of the interdisciplinary journal *Ethnography*. (For more information see: <http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant.>)

After the student paper presentations, members of the Yale School of Architecture faculty will provide responses.

## Submission Guidelines

Interested graduate students should submit a 400-word abstract related to one of the themes (miscommunication, manipulation, missed opportunities), as well as a curriculum vitae. Each proposal should clearly articulate the subject matter and its relevancy to the symposium's theme. Abstracts must be submitted electronically at [Iben.Falconer@yale.edu](mailto:Iben.Falconer@yale.edu) and [Olga.Pantelidou@yale.edu](mailto:Olga.Pantelidou@yale.edu) by midnight on **Friday, January 9, 2009**.

Successful candidates will be notified by the middle of January. Initial drafts of papers for a twenty-minute presentation will be due on February 27, 2009 for review. Final drafts will be due by March 13, 2009.

Questions or comments concerning the symposium can be directed to the symposium organizers at [Iben.Falconer@yale.edu](mailto:Iben.Falconer@yale.edu) or [Olga.Pantelidou@yale.edu](mailto:Olga.Pantelidou@yale.edu).

*The Graduate Student Symposium is organized by two of the senior students in the Master of Environmental Design (MED) program, Iben Falconer and Olga Pantelidou. The M.E.D. program is a two-year research-based program of advanced architectural studies culminating in a written thesis/independent project.*