CITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD: QUESTIONS OF CULTURE, CLIMATE AND DESIGN

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Tiny Living in Dortmund (Germany): An Experiment in Urban Sustainability and Sufficiency

• Author(s) Name:
Katharina Wood

• University or Company Affiliation:
TU Dortmund University, Germany

• Abstract (300 words):
Like many other cities around the globe, the German city of Dortmund is currently planning a tiny-house settlement with different forms of tiny living. The model project will consist of individually owned tiny houses as well as a modular multi-party small housing project with communally shared indoor and outdoor spaces. It is not only an experiment in tiny living, but also a model project in collective planning and building. From a cultural studies perspective, this paper analyzes the narratives surrounding the proposed tiny-house community and its so-called “triple bottom line” of sustainability, an accounting framework that measures the impact of a building in social, environmental, and economic terms. How can this tiny-house settlement contribute to urban sustainability? Sufficiency strategies also play an important role in the planning process as well as in the establishment of a sharing economy. The tiny village’s sharing economy will be supported by a community app.

This paper examines one tiny-house community as an example of the ecological narration and imagination underlying planning and building whilst also acknowledging the challenges and criticism faced by tiny-house settlements such as urban sprawl or the proliferation of the single-family home. The talk addresses multiple questions; for instance “through which narratives and practical measures is the model project in Dortmund scripted by engineers, urban planners, and interested parties?” “Who profits from this
building solution?" “Is there a class and race bias inherent in the tiny house movement as proposed by sociologist Tracey Harris?” And finally, the talk addresses if and in how far tiny living can be a means to tackle the housing affordability crisis and help toward building a greener city and more collective approaches to living and building.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

**Katharina Wood** is a doctoral researcher at TU Dortmund University, Germany, in the graduate research group “Scripts for Post-Industrial Urban Futures: American Models, Transatlantic Interventions” (short: City Scripts). In her dissertation "Conserving Whose World? Green Building Standards in the U.S. and Germany," she will dissect transatlantic scripts used to build a greener future as brought forth through visionary approaches towards the creations of sustainable cities. The project aims to analyze the underlying cultural scripts and visions of a ‘green’ future through transatlantic comparisons of green building projects.

Her main fields of interest are Urban Studies, Environmental Humanities, Green Cultural Studies, African American Literature and Media Studies. She received her M.A. in English and Political Science from Philipps-University Marburg in 2018. Her master thesis analyzed the social movement Black Lives Matter and its relationship to processes of identity formation.