



Slumming It – The Tourist Valorisation of Urban Poverty

Book Presentation and Author Meets Critic

2nd February 2017, 18.00h-20.00h

TU Berlin, HBS-1, Room 6.06
(Hardenbergstrasse 16-18, 10623 Berlin, S/U
Zoologischer Garten)

Dr Fabian Frenzel

Visiting Researcher CTS & University of Leicester, UK

Professor Hasso Spode (Respondent)

TU Berlin (HAT) & Leibniz-Universität Hannover (Inst. für
Soziologie)

Dr Gabriele Wendorf (Chair)

Scientific Director, CTS

In his new book Dr Fabian Frenzel reflects on ‘slumming’ as a social practice that takes better-off visitors to areas of urban poverty. With a long history dating to the 19th century, slumming today is a significant urban tourism niche with over 1 Mio tours annually sold, taking in poor neighbourhoods and slums in the larger cities of South Africa, Rio de Janeiro and Mumbai.

Frenzel investigates this controversial past time, reflecting on the ethical debates it triggers and the moral ambiguity involved. Questioning a short hand rejection of slumming as voyeuristic, he highlights the persuasiveness of travel practices and mobilities that take relatively wealthy visitors into neighbourhoods of the poor, including volunteering, activism and research tourism.

Frenzel understands contemporary slum tourism as a social practice closely tied to attempts at managing inequality and poverty in an emergent transnational care regime. In the book, tourism is recast as a productive, and potentially rebellious force that affects urban place making and intervenes in local social conflicts. Tourism’s productivity, or valorisation, may enhance and amplify local struggles for recognition and resources, but is also prone to being captured in urban regeneration schemes and gentrification.

Dr Fabian Frenzel is lecturer in Organisation Studies at the University of Leicester, UK. He is visiting researcher at Center for Technology and Society (research area “Social Movements, Technology, Conflicts”).

Professor Dr Hasso Spode is director of the Historical Archive on Tourism (Willy-Scharnow-Archiv) at Technische Universität Berlin (HAT at CTS/CMS)

Dr Gabriele Wendorf is scientific director of the Center for Technology and Society, Technical University Berlin