



GEOG 4023

Seminar in Special Topics on the City: Cartographies of War (Fall 2026)

Instructor: Jerzy (Jurek) Elżanowski (jerzy.elzanowski@carleton.ca)

Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays 16:05–17:25

Office Location and Hours: Dunton Tower 1203, by email appointment

Brightspace: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/450091>

Course Website: <https://carleton.ca/cartographies/courses/>

Short Course Description

In this course, we'll take a comparative look at historical and contemporary urban damage cartography in the context of world crisis, focusing on human and other-than-human loss and displacement. We'll examine everything from the destruction of Pompeii and Lisbon, through the London Blitz and the devastation of Warsaw, to current interactive damage mapping in Ukraine, Palestine, Syria, and Sudan. Students will expand an online atlas of war damage, contributing to the work of the international "Cartographies of Loss" research group.

Prerequisites and Preclusions: GEOG 3023, fourth-year Honours standing in Geography or Environmental Studies or BGIInS Specialization in Globalization and Environment or permission of the Department.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, you should be able to: analyze damage maps to better understand how people map urban disaster; evaluate the ethical implications of mapping human and other-than-human loss; use digital and AI-assisted tools in transparent and conscientious ways to organize and visualize research material; communicate the results of your research through an online, public-facing atlas.

Texts and Course Materials: I'll be posting course materials throughout the term on Brightspace or in the form of ARES, Google Drive, YouTube, Dropbox, and other internet links at least two weeks in advance. This includes course readings, videos, assignment descriptions, schedules and updates. This is a seminar, so lecture slides won't be posted online. I'll activate the Brightspace page and post the final outline by September 2, 2026.

Course Binder/Notebook: Please organize all readings to form a course binder/notebook that you bring to class each week. A paper binder is strongly encouraged (cost ca. \$50), but either print or digital is acceptable provided the binder is organized, annotated, available in class, and easy to submit. Please look into the CUSA free printing service for undergraduates (<https://www.cusaonline.ca/freeprinting/>). Part of your participation grade will be based on your consistent use of course materials and notes to back up statements made in class. I'll be grading your annotated course binder/notebook at the end of term. To reduce paper waste, you may donate your course binder for use in future years. I will be distributing donated binders to those interested during the first or second class.

Course Schedule

Classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 16:05–17:25, unless otherwise noted in Brightspace. *This schedule and reading list may change slightly to accommodate class needs, guest speakers, workshops, etc. Changes will be posted at least two weeks in advance.*

Please note that exact excerpt pages will be posted on Brightspace.

Week 1 - Introduction

10/09/26 – Introduction + global mapping workshop

In groups, organized geographically, search for and examine online maps of ongoing conflicts in: DRC, Ethiopia, Haiti, Lebanon, Myanmar, Palestine/Israel, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine/Russia, and Yemen. After the workshop, we'll go over the outline and structure of the course.

- No readings

Week 2 - What counts as damage? An overview of course materials

15/09/26 – Mapping Loss + discussion of atlas assignment

Overview of Cartographies of War project and student-produced Atlas of Damage and Loss

- Skim the hyperlinked presentation abstracts from the 2025 Cartographies of Loss conference: <https://carleton.ca/cartographies/homepage/program/>
- Skim the existing Atlas of Damage and Loss abstracts: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0cf1ffec0c86446da7ef46ebc4dd5f35/>

17/09/26 – Course literature overview

- Skim the titles and abstracts from all assigned course readings. Choose three or four abstracts to focus on. If no abstract is available, please skim the first one or two paragraphs of the introduction or assigned excerpt. In class, we'll work in small groups to divide up the readings and combine your observations. Prepare: a) notes on connections you notice between chosen readings, and b) a preliminary list of research gaps to fill in the atlas.
- **Please come prepared with fully compiled binders.**

Week 3

22/09/26 – Critical assessment of AI as a research and planning tool

- Helga Tawil-Souri, "Bitification and the Gaza Genocide," *Communication, Culture & Critique* 19, no. 1 (March 2026): 13–18.
- Me + Viv, episode "I'm Viv, An Artificial Intelligence" (Season 1, Episode 1), podcast, hosted by Alexandra Samuel, published November 19, 2025, 36 min., Apple Podcasts, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/me-viv/id1847891375?i=1000737416674>.
- Students are encouraged to listen to the whole podcast series to get a sense of the nuance and complexity of Alexandra Samuel's argument.

24/09/26 – Necropolitics and polycrisis

- Excerpts from Achille Mbembe, Chapter 3, "Necropolitics," in *Necropolitics*, trans. Steven Corcoran (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 66–92.
- Excerpts from: Judith J. Rakowski, Linn N. Schaan, Roel van Klink, Iryna Herzon, Adina Arth, Gregor Hagedorn, Julian Rode, Felix Creutzig, Guy Pe'er, "Characterizing the Global Polycrisis: A Systematic Review of Recent Literature," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 50 (2025): 159–183.
- Zoya Masoud, "Of Death and Hope around Heritage Construction," paper presented at Cartographies of Loss: The Afterlives of War, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, September 18, 2025, <https://carleton.ca/cartographies/videos/>.

Assignment reminder: Atlas proposal (10%) due before midnight 25/09/26 (flexible deadline; see table below)

Week 4

29/09/26 – ArcGIS StoryMaps workshop, location TBD

01/10/26 – War damage and climate violence

- Rami Msallam, "Mapping the Environmental Turn: Climate, Violence, and the Healing of Post-Conflict Geographies," paper presented at Cartographies of Loss: The Afterlives of War, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, September 16, 2025. See Brightspace for video access.
- Cynthia A. Kierner, "Introduction," in *Inventing Disaster: The Culture of Calamity* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 1–13.

Week 5

06/10/26 – Destruction of Pompeii (79 AD) and Lisbon (1755) as paradigms of urban disaster

- Cynthia A. Kierner, "Catastrophe in the Age of Enlightenment," in *Inventing Disaster: The Culture of Calamity* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 69–98.
- Please read letters 6:16 and 6:20 in Pliny, the Younger, and Betty Radice, *The Letters of the Younger Pliny*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969.
- Optional reading: Michael Hebbert, "The Long After-Life of Christopher Wren's Short-Lived London Plan of 1666," *Planning Perspectives* 35, no. 2 (March 3, 2020): 231–52.

08/10/26 – The emergence of modern war damage cartography in World War One

Excerpts from:

- Priya Satia, "The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia," *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 1 (February 2006): 16–51.
- Derek Gregory, "Gabriel's Map: Cartography and Corpography in Modern War," in *Geographies of Knowledge and Power*, ed. Peter Meusburger, Derek Gregory, and Laura Suarsana, *Knowledge and Space* 7 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015), 89–121.
- E.C.P. Monson and E. Marsland, *Air Raid Damage in London: Being a Record of the Effect of Aircraft Attack on Certain Public and Private Buildings* (London, 1923).
- London Museum, "The First World War Air Raids on London," *London Stories*, accessed December 17, 2025, <https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/collections/london-stories/first-world-war-air-raids-london/>.

Week 6

13/10/26 – War damage cartography and World War Two

- Excerpts from: Robin Woolven, "Introduction," in *The London County Council Bomb Damage Maps, 1939–1945*, ed. Ann Saunders (London: London Topographical Society and London Metropolitan Archives, 2005), 1–19.
- Jerzy Elżanowski and Carmen M. Enss, "Cartographies of Catastrophe: Mapping World War II Destruction in Germany and Poland," *Urban History* 49, no. 3 (August 2022): 589–611.
- London County Council Bomb Damage Map (map index), 1939–1945, London Picture Archive, ref. 346095, <https://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk/view-item?i=343492>.
- Introduced in class: Jane McArthur, "A Strange Temporality: Duologues from the London Bomb Damage Photograph Archive 1940–1945," paper presented by Ella Chmielewska, *Cartographies of Loss: The Afterlives of War*, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, September 15, 2025.

15/10/26 – German war damage cartography under National Socialism.

- Excerpts from: Niels Gutschow, "Planning the Rebuilding of Bombed Cities in Germany, 1943–1945," in *A Blessing in Disguise: War and Town Planning in Europe, 1940–1945*, edited by Jörn Düwel and Niels Gutschow (Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2013), 142–193.
- Jeffry M. Diefendorf, "Konstanty Gutschow and the Reconstruction of Hamburg," *Central European History* 18, no. 2 (June 1985): 143–169.

Week 7

20/10/26 – Visit to the Carleton Archives and Special Collections (Gutschow Collection)

22/10/26 – No class: National Trust conference / independent research

Assignment reminder: Midterm report and StoryMaps prototype (15%) due before midnight 23/10/26 (moderate deadline; see table below)

Week 8

27/10/26 and 29/10/26 – Fall break; no class

Week 9

03/11/26 – Architectural violence and destruction: Warsaw (1939-1945) and Khartoum (2023-present)

- Stanislaw Dziewulski and Stanislaw Jankowski, "The Reconstruction of Warsaw," *The Town Planning Review* 28, no. 3 (1957): 209–21.
- Excerpts from: Jerzy Elżanowski, "Ruins, Rubble and Human Remains: Negotiating Culture and Violence in Post-Catastrophic Warsaw," *Public Art Dialogue* 2, no. 2 (2012): 114–46.
- Deen Sharp, Sara Hagal Hassan, and Tarig Ali, *Urbicide in Khartoum: An Analysis of the Al-Amarat and Mayo Neighbourhoods, 2023–24* (Small Arms Survey and Centre on Armed Groups, June 2025).
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Warsaw: Maps," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/gallery/warsaw-maps>.

05/11/26 – Discussion of midterm report and StoryMaps prototype

Week 10

10/11/26 – Warsaw: Rubble poking through the skin

Short excerpts from:

- Adam Przywara, "Rubble Warsaw, 1945–1946: Urban Landscaping and Architectural Remains," *IKONOTHEKA* (2018): 121–137.
- Jerzy Elżanowski, "Domesticating Violence: Notes from a Socio-Spatial Incursion into Warsaw's Anthropogenic Stratum," in *Presence/ Absence/ Traces: Contemporary Artists on Jewish Warsaw*, ed. Ewa Chomicka and Agnieszka Pindera (Warsaw: POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, 2016), 164–181.
- Maria Magdalena Dembek, "Archaeological Fever: Situating Participatory Art in the Rubble of the Warsaw Ghetto," *Holocaust Studies* 26, no. 2 (2020): 198–220.
- Monika Stobiecka, "In the Shadow of Ruins: Rubble of the Post-War Warsaw," in *Shadow Archaeologies: In the Shadow of Antiquity or For Other Modes of Archaeological Worldmaking*, ed. Assaf Nativ and Gavin Lucas (London: Routledge, 2026), 259–273.

Additional Material:

- Jacek Konik, "Underground City: Archaeology of the Warsaw Ghetto in its Academic, Memorial and Social Context," *Internet Archaeology* 66 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.66.16>.
- International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), "Warsaw Ghetto Excavations – Archeology," July 19, 2024, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/news/warsaw-ghetto-excavations-archeology>.

12/11/26 – Warsaw: Open discussion and in-class review of primary documents from the instructor's library

Week 11

17/11/26 – Trees who remember

- David Fedman, "On Memory and Morphology: A Field Guide to Tokyo's Arboreal Archive of Wartime Destruction," paper presented (virtual) at Cartographies of Loss: The Afterlives of War, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, September 16, 2025, <https://carleton.ca/cartographies/videos/>.
- Franny Nudelman, "Remnants of the War on Trees: Mapping Ecocide," paper presented at Cartographies of Loss: The Afterlives of War, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, September 16, 2025. See Brightspace for video link.

19/11/26 – *Paper City* film presented in class

Week 12

24/11/26 – Discussion of *Paper City* film

- David Fedman and Cary Karacas, "A Cartographic Fade to Black: Mapping the Destruction of Urban Japan during World War II," *Journal of Historical Geography* 38, no. 3 (July 2012): 306–28.

26/11/26 – Discussion of final assignment progress

Assignment reminder: Complete draft submission in StoryMaps (30%) due before midnight 27/11/26 (moderate deadline; see table below)

Week 13

01/12/26 – Chernobyl and Gaza: Evidentiary/forensic analysis of urban conflict

- Susan Schuppli, "Hostile Witness," in *Material Witness: Media, Forensics, Evidence* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2020), 61–82.
- Excerpts from: Eyal Weizman, "Only the Criminal Can Solve the Crime," in *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza* (London: Verso, 2011), 99–138
- Optional comparative reading: Eyal Weizman, "Archaeology, Architecture and the Politics of Verticality," in *For Palestine: Essays from the Tom Hurndall Memorial Lecture Group*, ed. Ian Parker (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2023), 123–142.

03/12/26 – Workshop: editorial review + finalizing atlas

Week 14

08/12/26 – Retrospective course overview + atlas audit

10/12/26 – Final publication questions + course wrap-up and celebration

Assignment reminder: Course binder/notebook (10%) due at the end of class 10/12/26 (strict deadline; see table below)

Take-home exam reminder: Final editorial review, revision, and publication (10%) due before midnight 23/12/26 (strict deadline; see table below)

Course Evaluation

Assignment	Component	Deadlines/Dates	Grade Percentage	Notes
Atlas of Damage and Loss	Proposal	25/09/26 (F)	10%	Substantial progress to be made between submissions
	Midterm report and StoryMaps prototype	23/10/26 (M)	15%	
	Complete draft submission in StoryMaps	27/11/26 (M)	30%	
	Final editorial review, revision, publication	23/12/26 (S)	10%	Scheduled as take-home exam 2–5% extra credit possible for leadership roles
Class participation	Attendance and punctuality	All term	5%	No penalties for up to 3 absences; additional absences due to illness excused on case by case basis - please email before class!
	Reading-based contributions to class and group discussions and workshops, including any in-class writing activities	All term	20%	Quality of contributions is as important as frequency. Please situate contributions in assigned readings.
	Course binder/notebook	10/12/26 (S)	10%	Working document

Assignments and Policies

Assignments will be submitted both in ArcGIS and Brightspace (see Brightspace for details). Since this is a fourth-year seminar, I try to build in some flexibility around deadlines. The deadlines listed above fall into three categories: Strict (S), Moderate (M), and Flexible (F).

- Strict deadlines can't be missed. Late work won't be accepted unless there's a serious reason, such as illness or an approved accommodation.
- Moderate deadlines come with a 48-hour grace period. After that, I'll deduct 5% per day.
- Flexible deadlines can be negotiated with me, but the work must still be submitted within 7 days of the original date. No further extensions are possible.

Please aim to submit on time and use the grace periods only when you really need them.

Atlas of Damage and Loss (65%–cumulative): You'll collectively contribute to an existing online, public facing atlas that documents and analyzes historical and contemporary war damage maps: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0cf1ffec0c86446da7ef46ebc4dd5f35/>. Each student will produce an individual, research-based ArcGIS StoryMap entry focused on a specific map, city, conflict, organization, methodology, technology, or related practice. The assignment will develop in stages: proposal, midterm report and StoryMaps prototype, complete draft submission, and final editorial review, revision, and publication. In the final stage, you are expected to use your editorial judgement and make substantive improvements. Because this is a public facing collective project, final submissions must also meet publication standards, including clear formatting, working links, complete citations and captions, appropriate image use, and AI-use disclosure.

Class Participation (35%–cumulative): Participating in class means: a) coming to class regularly and on time; b) being prepared to discuss readings and other assigned material in a thoughtful and informed way; c) actively participating in workshops and activities; d) regularly participating in class writing activities; e) keeping a rich and annotated course binder.

Atlas management and leadership: Students who take on substantive leadership roles in developing the atlas will be eligible to receive 2-5% extra credit. Leadership roles include: developer, introduction editor, bibliography editor, entry editors. Please contact me for more information!

Cellphones and Laptops: All cellphones must be silenced and put away before class, unless needed as an assistive tool. Laptops and tablets may be used for course readings and note-taking, but I strongly encourage students to work from printed texts where possible and to use devices only in ways that support seminar discussion.

Formatting requirements: We are preparing a public facing, online atlas, so proper formatting for use in atlas software will be key. All formatting requirements will be communicated in class and/or posted on Brightspace.

Citations: All citations need to be formatted in Chicago Style, 18th ed. We'll be using the "Author-Date" style. The manual is available electronically through the Carleton library: https://www-chicagomanualofstyle-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html. Submissions will be marked down for improperly formatted citations.

Generative AI Policy and Disclosure: We'll be learning about—and using—generative AI creatively in this course. We'll discuss ethical AI use in class. AI use in course submissions must be thoroughly documented. I include my statement on AI use as an example: *I used ChatGPT (OpenAI, including GPT-5.6 Sol) as an assistive and collaborative tool in preparing and revising this course. I used it to check and align the course calendar and class dates;*

compare this outline with earlier versions of the course; research and verify recent academic literature and current damage-mapping projects; identify gaps and imbalances in the reading list; suggest alternative readings, pairings, excerpts, and ways of connecting historical and contemporary case studies; reorganize and revise portions of the course schedule; clarify assignment structures and policies; and, on occasion, edit technical passages in the outline. In particular, I used AI critically in reconsidering the course's Eurocentric framing and in identifying scholarship by researchers working from or in relation to places currently affected by war. I reviewed and verified all sources used in preparing the weekly schedule. I questioned, modified, and often rejected AI-generated suggestions throughout this process. In a reflexive twist, I used ChatGPT to help draft this disclosure statement, since the AI was uniquely positioned to summarize the work it had performed in developing the course. I'm happy to share my chats upon request.

Course Communications: Please email me using your Carleton accounts only. I'll do my best to respond to your emails within 48 hours and ask that you follow the same rule when responding to my queries. I will avoid responding to messages on the weekends or in the evenings. Emails received on Friday will likely be answered the following Monday afternoon.

Copyright, Intellectual Property, and Recordings: All course materials—lectures, videos, discussions, slides, assignments, and anything else shared in this class—are copyright protected and belong to their creator. You may use these materials for your own learning, but you may not copy, post, record, or distribute them in any form without written permission from the copyright holder. Audio or video recording of classes is not permitted without my written consent. Posting, sharing, or selling course materials without permission violates Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy and may also carry legal consequences.

Grade Appeals and Previous Work: For grades appeals processes, please see Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy as well as the registrar's website. You may not re-use previous work without written permission from the instructor.

The following texts are excerpts from Carleton's academic integrity, accommodations, and equity policies.

Academic Integrity: The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotation marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty follows a rigorous process for academic integrity and allegations, including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Final Grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Requests for Academic Accommodations: Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (<http://students.carleton.ca/course-outline>).

Scheduling and Examination Support: Scheduling and Examination Services provides various supports for both in-term and end-of-term tests and exams. Details can be found on the Exam Support website.

Statement on Student Mental Health: As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information please visit Carleton University's Mental Health and Wellness web pages.

Emergency Resources (on and off campus)

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>