

## Appendix: A Chronicle of the Epoch of Loss

### Preface: Dark Mountain (Getting Acquainted)

Friday 29 September 2017 11:30 am – lunch – Ruth mentions [Dark Mountain Project](#) to Michael

Saturday 30 September 2017 Michael email to Ruth:

*have spent part of the morning with the Dark Mountain Project. Very interesting and sobering. But it does make me think there might be an interesting academic analog. I wonder if Mark Abbott from Geology would be interested, or if they still want to make the argument...*

Monday 2 October 2017 (Michael's 48<sup>th</sup> birthday) Ruth reply to Michael

*I really like the idea of thinking about what an interdisciplinary and cross-campus version of Dark Mountain would look like – scientists chronicling loss and transformation without jumping straight to a stance of mitigation, social scientists doing the same with social disruption, humanists identifying art and literature about loss. All of this is going on already, but I think it would be powerful to wrap it together rhetorically and have some events and publications around it.*

Tuesday 3 October 2017 Michael reply to Ruth:

*Me too -- let's keep thinking about this and see what we can come up with...*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*perhaps of interest in this connection:*

<https://pittsburghlectures.org/lectures/eric-dorfman/>

Thursday 5 October 2017 Ruth email to Michael:

*Very cool. I met Eric Dorfman last month. The museum is about to launch an Anthropocene exhibit, and they are hosting a big kickoff conference (<https://2017.icom-nathist.org/>). It's primarily, though not exclusively, for museum professionals. Eric is pretty new to town and to this position. He's interested in doing more with Pitt – and I would love to do more with the museum – so it would be great to think about what a collaboration with him might look like.*

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## Chapter 1: The Sawyer Seminar

Friday 12 January 2018 Michael email to Ruth:

*[subject line: "just wondering"] whether you'd be interested in putting in a Sawyer Seminar request for something along the lines of the environmental project we discussed over lunch last term -- something to do with loss, conservation of memories and artifacts, inhabiting an era of disaster, etc. Sawyer seminar one-page letters of intent are due on Tuesday, all we'd have to do for now is say we are interested.*

Saturday 14 January 2018 Ruth email to Michael

*I am definitely interested. I am already enlisted into a LOI that Q is putting together, but it is on an entirely different topic, and I assume that there's no reason not to participate in two different proposals at this stage. What do you think?*

*I should have some time tomorrow to pay attention to this if you want to start a document.*

Saturday 14 January 2018 Michael email to Ruth

*OK, great -- I'm with you, I have been in conversations about a number of possible combinations for this. I think all that's needed for the 16th deadline is a brief statement of general intent. I plan actually to submit 2 possible projects, just to get my foot in the door for the meeting on the 18th to learn more. Again, I don't see why there's a problem with overlapping personnel. I'll try to draft something quickly and see what comes up. Main thing we'd need is to generate a list of potentially interested colleagues...*

*I'll send something later*

[Later that day – Michael email to Ruth]

*OK, see the attached. Luckily all we need by Tuesday is a one-page letter; this would satisfy that requirement. It still needs to be fleshed out, partners identified, etc. I found it strangely hard to say anything I felt confident about, probably not surprising given how little time I've spent thinking about it. Yet I think in some ways the novelty is what makes this topic attractive -- so important, so few people talking about it.*

*Anyway, that's all just to say that I'm not committed to a single thing in the attached short document. Please feel free to add, delete, change anything you want. And as I said, all we need for Tuesday is a one-page letter of interest, which it's easy to do. Mostly this is a prompt to see if we can come up with something worth doing.*

[Later that day, Ruth replies to Michael]

*I think this is fantastic, and I am very enthusiastic about it. I've added a few details and citations, but I have not changed the gist of your draft. I think this is well worth doing, whether or not it's funded through the Sawyer bid.*

*I'm not sure who to suggest to ask in as a collaborator. I know that Mark Abbott is starting up a Climate Research Center (<http://climatecenter.pitt.edu/>), but I don't know whether or not he'd be particularly interested in this approach?*

Tuesday 16 January 2018 Michael email to colleagues gauging interest in signing on to the Sawyer Seminar proposal:

*Dear all,*

*In the flurry of preparation for Sawyer seminar proposals, I've put together the attached concept note with Ruth Mostern from History. I know some of you may be involved with other LOIs at this point; I am too. I am just asking that you take a look at this one, let me know if you might be interested, and forward to anyone you think might be. Note that at this point we're just tossing a hat into the ring; pre-proposals aren't due until later.*

*Sorry it's so last minute, but again, I am just gauging interest.*

[Below is the LOI submitted to the Dietrich School]

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### **Sawyer Seminar: Theory, History, and Culture in an Epoch of Loss**

*This seminar explores the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges doing theory and history in times of profound global loss.*

It is impossible to predict the effects of anthropogenic climate change with any precision, but by all indications they will be severe. One prominent feature is that of loss – of species, environments, and sites of human meaning and memory. Already this loss is evident in massive and accelerating species extinction and growing climate-related conflict and migration. Intense warming and acidification of the oceans has led to the destruction of nineteen percent of coral reefs and an additional fifteen percent could be dead within fifteen years. Some ecologists warn that if global warming continues unchecked, all corals could be extinct within a century. Elizabeth Kolbert's bestselling *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (2015) draws popular attention to the cataclysmic contraction of diversity of life on earth through which we are now living while works of fiction, such as Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* (2013) dramatize the human impact of the experience of loss. Fires, floods, droughts and superstorms are stretching and breaking social life from Indonesia to Puerto Rico. Behind warfare and refugee flight in Syria lie the "slow violence" (per literary theorist Rob Nixon) of agricultural collapse in an increasingly hot and dry land. Theorists and planners, reviving dire Cold War rhetoric, talk of sacrifice zones.

Most scholars and activists have, understandably and appropriately, focused on efforts to educate the populace about the severity of the threat in hopes of averting a catastrophic temperature increase of more than two degrees Celsius. Scientists likewise concentrate on documenting the present, modeling the future, and seeking potential mitigation. However, recent studies suggest

that the chances of limiting temperature rise to below two degrees are slim. The targets adopted in the Paris Accord, for instance, would yield closer to a 2.5 degree increase or higher, and a UN report released this week predicts that the Paris limits will be exceeded by 2040. In such a scenario, sea levels could rise 12 meters or more, displacing hundreds of millions of people from their homes and threatening the viability of human societies. Moreover, tipping point phenomena, such as the melting of the Greenland or Antarctic ice sheets or the thawing of permafrost could trigger changes that would unleash even more catastrophic temperature increases.

In response, growing numbers of policy-oriented scholars have begun to focus on resiliency; that is, on the ways in which societies might adapt to changes of this magnitude. However, humanists and artists are just beginning to attend to appropriate modes of theorizing the fact of loss and the trauma of ecological transformation as well as to preserving, remembering, and memorializing that which will be lost. Examples of such signal works include philosopher Thom Van Dooren's *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (2016) and creative essayist Roy Scranton's *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization* (2015).

These and related works offer the framework for our proposed Sawyer Seminar, which will engage humanists, social scientists, natural scientists, activists and artists around questions like: How should we begin to think about the imminent disappearance of massive numbers of species and our role in precipitating it? How can we appropriately record and collectively acknowledge these losses? How have people in the past dealt with climate change and environmental catastrophe? How can we take responsibility for and bear witness to the profound human suffering that will ensue? What modes of cultural expression befit such a time of loss, and what role can the arts play in helping us to acknowledge, mourn, and survive this loss? Can we afford the time to grieve our collective losses when there is so much practical work to be done?

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[We received lots of very positive feedback from the colleagues to whom we reached out (including one from another colleague also preparing a rival proposal, "assuming that you are frantically working (as we are) to finish up the pre-proposal." Another was eager to sign on despite being "drowning over here." We also received this very helpful bit of feedback from one of our colleagues:]

*My one bit of advice at this stage is to include a little more of a constructive (but not falsely optimistic) note in the final paragraph so that the Mellon people don't feel like they are being asked to support a humanities doom and gloom session.*

*Perhaps along lines such as these:*

*Worldwide resistance by younger people, policy changes by certain state and local governments throughout the world, and survival shifts by some big businesses, are important, positive developments. Humanists have traditionally forged big picture narratives of major world historical changes such as this, and the arts have told more local and specific stories. How might*

*we most effectively find constructive pathways through large-scale and particular experiences of loss; how might we find futures for ourselves and our planet?*

Friday 26 January 2018 Ruth email to Michael

*FYI – I got a very enthusiastic assent from Mark Abbott the other day about our Sawyer proposal.*

[Later that day – Ruth email reply to Mark Abbott, cc; Michael]

*Thanks for the meeting the other day. Your Center is exciting, and I'm pleased to be involved.*

*I'm also very happy that you're interested in the Sawyer Seminar preproposal that I'm putting together with Michael Goodhart. I don't know that we need a formal letter of support at this stage, so much as feedback and suggestions about how to expand this into a compelling 3000-6000 word narrative for an interdisciplinary seminar with a budget of \$225K (which includes \$75K for a postdoc and \$75K for two phd fellowships), grounded in the humanities and social sciences and oriented toward themes and case studies. You can find more information about the initiative here: <https://mellon.org/programs/higher-education-and-scholarship-humanities/fellowships/sawyer-seminars/>. I'm attaching our one-page prospectus*

Friday 2 February 2018, a flutter of emails on when and where to meet to work on the document.

Tuesday 6 February 2018 David Ruvolo begins collecting short cvs of Sawyer partner faculty, one of those exercises in cat herding for which academia is famous. Many emails.

Wednesday 7 February 2018 Ruth email to Michael

*FYI – My plate is too full to organize a new event. However, I was very interested by the degree of interest in Korea at the Hot Topics event on Monday. Here are some resources if you would like to follow up on any of that. I'd be happy to be involved in something if it does not require too much overhead to plan it.*

Wednesday 7 February 2018 Michael email to Ruth

*very sorry I missed the conversation -- just drowning this week.*

Thursday 8 February 2018 Ruth email to Michael

*This is a document about Migration and Neoliberal Governance that looks like it might have gotten misnamed somewhere along the line.*

*Rushing from place to place all day myself, and just now sitting down with our draft proposal,*

[Later that day, Michael replies to Ruth]

*Hm. Weird. Here's the word file (same name) which is what it says it is. Sorry about that.*

*...I am planning to put in a few hours on this tomorrow afternoon in advance of our Friday AM meeting.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*I've been working on the proposal off and on the last couple of days, but I have also been busy with other deadlines and commitments, and I'm not going to be able to do too much more today. I'm afraid we're still not that close to having a submittable version. We should meet tomorrow morning as planned, but perhaps we should be thinking about contingency plans if we don't manage to hit the deadline with a credible proposal by tomorrow afternoon*

Friday 9 February 2018 – deadline for submission of Sawyer seminar draft proposals. Ruth Email to Michael

*I've finished the description of each seminar session and I've done one more read-through. I think it is in quite (surprisingly!) good shape, except that the Local Partners section (Section 6, page 9-10) needs to be fleshed out. Then it's just a matter of packaging it all up to send to Holger, and letting our colleagues know what we've done in their names.*

*I've got meetings the rest of the day, but the ones from 3:45 onwards are a bit fungible. I'll monitor my email and try to respond if there are any issues. My phone number, if you want to text me, is (xxx) xxx-xxxx*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*this is great. I am just out of my reading group, with three hours to get going on this. I will fill out that remaining part, give it a last read, and get it submitted. Will shout if there's a crisis, but I think we're in good shape. I'll also distribute to our colleagues with the appropriate framing note we discussed.*

*thanks so so much for pushing this most of the way!!*

Friday 9 February 2018, 4:34pm Michael email to faculty who have affiliated with the seminar. (Time is relevant because of the 5pm submission deadline.)

*attached please find a draft of the Sawyer seminar pre-proposal that Ruth Mostern and I have drafted and submitted ahead of today's 5pm deadline. In an ideal world we would have circulated this to you as a draft for your input. On the other hand, this is merely a pre-proposal; should we be selected as the internal winner, we'll have a month to benefit from your input and expertise as we further craft, revise, and fine-tune the proposal in advance of its submission to Mellon. In case we don't win (and give the quality of the proposal in preparation, there's a good chance we might not), we'll still have a chance to gather your input as we think about alternative ways to come up with the core funding (\$75,000) needed to make the seminar work. Think of it this way: either way, we've spared you (for now) the work of getting back to us on a tight deadline, and either way, your input will be decisive at the next stage.*

*That's a long way of saying: sorry it wasn't finished sooner (we're glad it got finished at all). We look forward to hearing your thoughts as these ideas evolve.*

*Thanks for your interest in this project, and best wishes for a lovely weekend*

[The text of the pre-proposal follows]

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### **Theory, History, and Culture in an Epoch of Loss**

*For Submission to the Sawyer Seminar Internal Competition  
February 9, 2018*

Lead Hosts: Michael Goodhart (Political Science, Global Studies Center), Ruth Mostern (History, World History Center).

Additional Pitt Co-hosts:

CVs on Box at [https\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](https://_____) (and attached)

### **Executive Summary**

This seminar explores the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss. Through the activity of the seminar, we aim to develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss. The seminar will foster conversation among scholars, activists, artists, curators, policy-makers and writers from on and beyond our campus.

At present, discussion about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system -- transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems -- focuses largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. After all, the continued existence of human life on earth may in fact depend upon efforts to geoengineer the atmosphere or the reefs, and it is understandable that we wish to protect the remaining members of beloved nonhuman species.

At the same time, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing from the map, millenia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth, Puerto Ricans without electricity are abandoning their homes and moving

to Florida. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch.

To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? How can excellent and constructive science and policy-making coexist with the acceptance that there will be profound loss? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

We are planning a program of activity that is structured as follows:

1. A preliminary year of preparatory activities and planning with local partners.
2. A kickoff meeting of a diverse group of local academics, activists, artists and curators in which we frame questions, set an agenda, and read work by visitors who will join us throughout the year.
3. A fall series of four seminars, each with three visitors representing the arts, activism, and science respectively. Our fall themes are Past and Future, Losing Species, Losing Homes, and Losing Communities.
4. A winter tour of local heritage and conservation sites such as Carnegie Museum, the Phipps Conservatory, the City of Asylum, the National Aviary, and the Carrie Furnace.
5. A spring series of four seminars structured the same way as the fall events. Our spring themes are Losing Ecosystems, Losing Societies, Losing Truth, and The Problem of Hope.
6. A wrap-up summer meeting to discuss what we have learned and plan for next steps.
7. A second year of activity during which we disseminate the findings from the seminar through a website and potentially through a published book of essays, creative writing and art.

Five throughlines will structure and link conversation across our themes. They are:

1. Loss. What is disappearing?
2. Elegy. How do we articulate sadness and fear about loss?
3. Power. Who is most vulnerable to loss and displacement?
4. Communication. How do we talk about losses that are so hard to bear?
5. Connection. How do we link the immediate and the epochal, the local and the global?

The seminar proper is complemented by an extensive and innovative plan for community partnerships with conservation-minded entities in the city and region that will include, art, performance, and natural conservation.

## **Narrative**

### *1. Rationale and Significance*

It is impossible to predict the effects of anthropogenic climate change with any precision, but by all indications they will be severe. One prominent feature is that of loss – of species, environments, and sites of human meaning and memory. Already this loss is evident in massive



and accelerating species extinction and growing climate-related conflict and migration. Intense warming and acidification of the oceans has led to the destruction of nineteen percent of coral reefs and an additional fifteen percent could be dead within fifteen years. Some ecologists warn that if global warming continues unchecked, all corals could be extinct within a century. Elizabeth Kolbert's bestselling *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (2015) draws popular attention to the cataclysmic contraction of diversity of life on earth through which we are now living while works of fiction, such as Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* (2013) dramatize the human impact of the experience of loss. Fires, floods, droughts and superstorms are stretching and breaking social life from Indonesia to Puerto Rico. Behind warfare and refugee flight in Syria lie the "slow violence" (per literary theorist Rob Nixon) of agricultural collapse in an increasingly hot and dry land. Theorists and planners, reviving dire Cold War rhetoric, talk of sacrifice zones.

Most scholars and activists have, understandably and appropriately, focused on efforts to educate the populace about the severity of the threat in hopes of averting a catastrophic temperature increase of more than two degrees Celsius. Scientists likewise concentrate on documenting the present, modeling the future, and seeking potential mitigation. However, recent studies suggest that the chances of limiting temperature rise to below two degrees are slim. The targets adopted in the Paris Accord, for instance, would yield closer to a 2.5 degree increase or higher, and a UN report released last month predicts that the Paris limits will be exceeded by 2040. In such a scenario, sea levels could rise 12 meters or more, displacing hundreds of millions of people from their homes and threatening the viability of human societies. Moreover, tipping point phenomena, such as the melting of the Greenland or Antarctic ice sheets or the thawing of permafrost could trigger changes that would unleash even more catastrophic temperature increases.

In response, growing numbers of policy-oriented scholars have begun to focus on resiliency; that is, on the ways in which societies might adapt to changes of this magnitude. However, humanists and artists are just beginning to attend to appropriate modes of theorizing the trauma of ecological transformation, the attendant fact of loss, and the ways in which we might preserve, remember, and memorialize that which will be lost. Examples of such signal works include philosopher Thom Van Dooren's *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (2016) and creative essayist Roy Scranton's *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization* (2015).

These and related works offer the framework for our proposed Sawyer Seminar, which will engage humanists, social scientists, natural scientists, activists and artists around questions like: How should we begin to think about the imminent disappearance of massive numbers of species and our role in precipitating it? How can we appropriately record and collectively acknowledge these losses? How have people in the past dealt with climate change and environmental catastrophe? How can we take responsibility for and bear witness to the profound human suffering that will ensue? What modes of cultural expression befit such a time of loss, and what role can the arts play in helping us to acknowledge, mourn, and survive this loss? Can we afford the time to grieve our collective losses when there is so much practical work to be done?

Our goal is to avoid the language of sustainability and resilience. While these concepts are of urgent importance, foregrounding the search for solutions has also functioned as a mode of deflection. The relentless focus on solutions and mitigation reflects the dominant political, economic and cultural impulses of contemporary (neoliberal) capitalist societies: a refusal of responsibility for ecological disaster based in denial and made possible through the well-financed lies and obfuscations peddled by corporations enriched by the carbon economy and enabled by the limited capacity of economically precarious people to pay attention, learn the truth, and mobilize in defense of their homes and societies and of the ecosystems that support them.

This focus makes it difficult to pause and contemplate the nature and degree of the upheaval now coming clearly into view, and it discourages the acknowledgment of and reckoning with loss. Our hope is to imagine how we might appropriately recognize, acknowledge, and process this loss in ways that can contribute to our collective ethical and spiritual survival.

While the seminar itself is a one-year initiative -- a pop-up research center -- we anticipate that the work it initiates will continue and reverberate far beyond this initial incarnation. In intangible ways, it will foster new thinking, new connections, and new research among its participants and in a host city that is well-positioned to benefit from these activities. In addition to the seminar itself, we plan to create a website with original content developed by seminar participants and curated by a postdoctoral fellow. We will record eight podcast conversations with the twenty-four diverse visitors we will host over the course of the seminar year. We will incubate, plan and solicit contributions for an attractive illustrated book for a broad audience that contains information about the science of the Anthropocene, creative essays, art and poetry. The production of the book itself is outside the scope of the seminar, but we will use Sawyer funds to support two graduate students for the year following the seminar who might assist in this work, seeking students who will have participated actively in the seminar, in order to assist in its compilation.

## *2. Cases and Perspectives On Them*

We propose eight case topics, each of which will be the subject of one seminar session. We have included the name and description of at least one potential visitor under each topic. Our current list of proposed visitors is dominated by men, professional academics, and white citizens of the global north. We are committed to diversifying our list of invitees prior to the beginning of the seminar.

*Past and Future.* Our inaugural session focuses on the conceptual and existential questions that the Anthropocene poses. In a rapidly changing world, what does it mean to be human, and what kinds of lives should we live? What kind of work should writers, thinkers and artists prioritize if the stability of civilization is at risk? If mitigation will not save us from the climate crisis, what will our future be like? A key theme of this session will be the concept of memory. How have past peoples articulated eschatology? What do we hope (and fear) will live on past ourselves, our ways of life, and the species and ecosystems with which we share the planet? For this session our invitees may include a scientist who can share up-to-date climate projections, a creative writer like Roy Scranton (author of *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene*), and an art historian like T. J. Demos who works on the relationship between contemporary art, colonialism, and climate crisis.

*Losing Species.* We are currently in the midst of what is becoming known as the Sixth Extinction, the sixth occasion of cataclysmic contraction of species diversity on the planet, and the first occasion where the actions of one species are responsible for the collapse of all the others. We will explore the scientific, philosophical, ethical, cultural, and political issues that arise in the context of species extinctions and human entanglements with threatened species and places. We will anchor this session around a visit from an evolutionary biologist who can discuss extinction science, and an environmental ethicist like Thom Van Dooren, author of *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* and the forthcoming *Making Worlds with Crows: A Multispecies Ethics*.

*Losing Homes.* One of the most anguishing aspects of the age of loss that our seminar will explore is that the most vulnerable people in the most climate-impacted places in the world are losing their homes. In some cases, people lose homes in a literal sense because they are inundated by water, consumed by flames, or covered by sand. In other cases, people flee the war, violence, expropriation or economic collapse that ensue as a result of ecological pressures. In still other cases, the losses are metaphorical, when people lose memory and heritage as ecological change extinguishes foodways, traditional livelihoods, and cherished landscapes of recreation or worship. Visitors to this session would include people like the novelist Barbara Kingsolver, author of *Flight Ways*, about butterfly migration, coal mining, and rural life in West Virginia, or literary critic Rob Nixon, author of *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, which reads global novels and memoirs in order to demonstrate the inattention that is often paid to the attritional lethality of many environmental crises.

*Losing Communities.* In some cases, losses are not only likely to devastate families and their homes, but to overwhelm entire cities or regions. Entire peoples will scatter. The closest past analogues are total war and genocide. In this seminar, we hope to learn from those histories as we explore newly unfolding and incipient losses that result from ecological changes. We hope to focus a case study on an indigenous perspective. We may explore the experience of the Ogoni survivors of oil drilling in the Niger delta, a region recently chronicled by geographer Michael Watts and photographer Edward Burtynsky, among others. We may also identify an activist from the pan-indigenous Standing Rock movement to oppose the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline on traditional Sioux land, or someone who can speak to the plight of Syrian or Sahelian climate refugees, as well as the work of a locally-connected artist like LaToya Ruby Frazier.

*Losing Ecosystems.* Entire ecosystems are now at risk of collapse as well -- in the arctic and the coral reefs as a direct result of climate change, and in tropical rainforests as a result of logging. What does it mean for the planet to lose an entire ecosystem that plays an essential role in the complex network of interlinked earth systems? Will ocean life survive the loss of biodiverse coral reefs in any recognizable way? If oceans collapse, are entire terrestrial systems doomed as well? For this session, we intend to invite an ecologist who is experienced in explaining interdisciplinary earth sciences to a diverse audience and who can articulate the human consequences of this perilous situation. Soil scientist Asmeret Berhe would be one such person. We would also like to invite anthropologist Anna Tsing, who has recently written so evocatively and eloquently about the ways that displaced people make new meaning in disturbed landscapes, in *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Through

the fact and metaphor of the matsutake mushroom, this book strikes an extraordinary balance between chronicling loss and finding hope.

*Losing Societies.* As entire ecosystems are at risk of collapse, so too are cultures, taking with them entire languages, forms of human relationship, and relationships to the natural world. Societies have collapsed under climate pressure before; Classical Mayan civilization is one well-known example. And just as the Sixth Extinction of species is well underway already, small scale human societies are in an advanced state of loss right now, at a pace that has accelerated over the decades and centuries. The Endangered Languages Project lists over three thousand languages at risk of extinction, each one reflecting a people's unique worldview and a vision about how people relate to one another and to the world around them. We will invite a cultural anthropologist and an archaeologist to join us for this session. We will also invite an artist whose oeuvre focuses on expropriation and social death, perhaps photographer LaToya Ruby Frazier, who is presently working on water crises from Flint to Puerto Rico; or Matthew Christopher, known for his project "Abandoned America: A Eulogy for Ruins in Our Midst."

*Losing Truth.* One feature of the epoch of loss is the declining regard for truth and expertise and the rise of post-facts. Governments and corporations that benefit from the status quo manipulate science and communication in ways that foreclose the social expression of environmental loss, deepen its disruptions, sow confusion about the present and the future, and make it difficult for people to make conceptual connections between disastrous events and personal connections with one another. To this session we plan to invite scientists, activists and artists who are thinking about the collapse of truth and about creative ways to communicate with clarity about loss. Our invitees could include an environmental philosopher like Kim De Wolff, who has worked on the ways that diverse constituencies talk about the Pacific Garbage Patch; or Dale Jamieson, who has studied the failure of social and political movements to stop climate change. They could include authors of speculative fiction who contemplate power relations in dystopian futures, such as Paolo Bacigalupi, author of *The Water Knife* about a near-future arid southwest, or Jeff VanderMeer, whose Southern Reach trilogy focuses on government control of uninhabited and abandoned land.

*The Question of Hope.* This final session asks our seminar participants to consider a range of agendas for activists, artists and scientists who have confronted difficult truths about loss. How do we balance the work of commemoration and elegy with the imperative to live effectively and ethically in the present? Visitors might include representatives of the Dark Mountain Project, authors of the *Uncivilization Manifesto*, a call for art and literature to come to terms with the scale of entwined ecological, economic and social crises; or activist and documentary filmmaker Josh Fox, whose most recent film is *How to Let Go of the World and Love All The Things Climate Can't Change* and who is well known for his opposition to gas drilling and his support of the Standing Rock coalition against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

### *3. Thematic Threads*

The seminar itself will consist in eight sessions, one per month throughout the academic year. Rather than the familiar model of academic lectures, we propose that each session will convene a scientist (*Wissenschaftler*, from the humanities, social or natural sciences), a policy-maker or activist, and an artist or curator in a carefully structured and moderated conversation around the

month's theme. At each session, we will match local and external participants as part of our outreach program. We will also ensure that the series seeks diversity of academic rank, background and expertise, race, gender, and place of origin.

Again, the overarching theme linking our seminar sessions and related programming is loss. Several subsidiary themes cut across and unify the various sessions.

- *Commemoration and elegy.* How can we develop new modes of thinking and reflection on loss: what's required to recognize, accept, and process loss in ways that make it visible rather than denying, obscuring or diminishing it through the pursuit of recovery or mitigation.
- *Power.* The impact and experience of loss is mediated through power. While some types of loss -- of species, or of ecosystems -- affect everyone, they do not affect everyone in the same ways or to the same extent. The rich will suffer fewer losses than the poor, and those they suffer will be cushioned in various ways. Additionally, the accessibility of certain modes of commemoration -- from cultural forms like theater and museums to virtual reality and other technologies -- will be conditioned by power as well.
- *Communication.* Loss is a difficult concept and reality, one that resides near the limits of familiarity and knowability. How can the idea and the experience of loss be conveyed effectively to the diverse human family? What kind of language is needed to convey it? The challenge here includes but surpasses interdisciplinarity, as it affects people far beyond the university. To address it, our seminar involves activists and artists as well as people directly impacted by loss and people directly involved in activities of elegy and commemoration (e.g., actually displaced people, museums and memory institutions, natural conservation organizations). *Connection.* The loss we are concerned with is at once present and epochal, material and spiritual, local and global. It is fundamentally relational -- that is, to do with our connections with one another and with the past and the future. How can we expand, sustain, and theorize these connections?

#### *4. Suitability of the Host and Resonance with Initiatives and Priorities*

Our proposal benefits from the core involvement of three interdisciplinary Centers, each of which will contribute intellectual expertise and organizational capacity in support of the seminar: The Global Studies Center (GSC) promotes critical global thinking and practical engagement with the world through the interdisciplinary study of transnational processes. It emphasizes the connections, divisions, disruptions, inequalities, and productive possibilities these processes engender across time and space. One of seven National Resource Centers for International Studies funded by the US Department of Education, the GSC fosters innovative research, rigorous study, and thoughtful practice through its collaborations with staff, students, faculty, and community partners locally and around the world, creating diverse and inclusive spaces for intellectual growth and debate.

The World History Center (WHC), an interdisciplinary center administratively situated in the Department of History, conducts and supports research and education about global and transregional connections in the human past. The Center gathers faculty and students to understand past processes of human integration, the people who have lost and benefitted from them, and the consequences they have engendered.

The Climate and Global Change Research Center (CGCRC) is a multidisciplinary center comprised of researchers from different departments throughout the University of Pittsburgh. It aims to advance research collaborations among departments to develop cross-disciplinary projects that focus on climate change. Together, these units can mobilize a large and diverse group of faculty and students with the varied backgrounds, expertise, and connections needed to help the seminar thrive.

This seminar and related programming will advance several aims important for the University and its constituent units. Especially through the extensive outreach program we envision (see item 6), the seminar will help to build strong ties with our local communities and harness our combined resources to advance this research agenda (Plan for Pitt, Goal 3: strengthen community). Convening this unique constellation of scholars, artists, and policy-makers and activists will advance the frontiers of knowledge in this existentially important are, demonstrating an “interdisciplinary perspective on real-world problem solving, and a future-focused approach oriented to address long-term challenges facing the world” (Global Plan, Goal 3: global impact).

We plan to recruit the post-doctoral fellow in the year preceding the seminar. We hope to involve several Pitt graduate students in the seminar itself, and to award the doctoral fellowships for the year following the seminar. This approach allows for the activities of the seminar itself to shape the students’ doctoral research and provides an opportunity to build stronger mentoring relationships among the students and core faculty members in the program. The students will then also have the opportunity to take part in the execution of the post-seminar publication plans of the group (outlined below). Their presence during that year will also, we hope, help us to maintain momentum through related programming with our community partners and on the creation of a unique and beautiful interdisciplinary book combining creative and critical essays, art, photographs, and poetry, which may serve both as a memento of our activities and as a resource for others taking up the practice of commemoration.

##### *5. Procedures for Selecting Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellows*

The project team will write a call for a postdoctoral fellow and circulate it widely through personal connections, listservs, professional organizations, and social media. We will reach out to groups like SEEDS (<http://esa.org/seeds/>), the organization for professional ecologists from underrepresented groups, in order to cultivate a diverse applicant pool. We are particularly interested in seeking applicants from interdisciplinary fields like science studies who have training and a demonstrated track record in communicating across boundaries with scientists, artists, social scientists, curators and activists.

The roles we envision for the post-doc in relation to the seminar include: hosting podcast interviews with the three guest participants for each session; convening and participating actively in the seminar; managing the project website; and, hosting the winter tour. Thus, in addition to a research focus, the post-doc will have the opportunity to develop career skills relevant to numerous academic and alt-ac careers.

We will award both PhD fellowships for the year *following* the seminar. This will allow us to build a pool of potential candidates during the two preparatory years (especially the seminar year) and to identify and recruit individuals who distinguish themselves in the seminar. Hiring both of them during the same year will allow the two students to form a cohort and collaborate with one another. It will also allow us to maintain momentum after the seminar and to ensure that there are individuals who are tasked with ensuring that we capture and publish insights that we will have reached during the seminar year.

#### *6. Partnerships Outside the University*

Our proposed seminar focuses on global and epochal loss, and it is appropriate that we hold it as residents of a region that has been experiencing successive and profound waves of ecological transformation and displacement for almost two centuries. The permanent loss of landscape, home and memory -- these are forms of anguish and knowledge which Pittsburghers are well equipped to discuss. It is therefore important to our vision of the seminar that we involve local individuals, organizations, and memory institutions with expertise and connections beyond our own campus. Pittsburgh is also home to a number of highly visible cultural institutions tasked with ecological and species conservation and memory, and we anticipate involving them as well. We benefit from existing connections with most of the entities named below.

- Carnegie Museum of Natural History. The Museum's Director, Eric Dorfman, has expressed interest in partnerships with Pitt, and the museum is poised to be the first to appoint a curator of the Anthropocene
- Carnegie Nexus program. Carnegie Nexus is an initiative that taps the amazing material and intellectual assets of the four Carnegie Museums as they collaborate with other big thinkers to present insightful, risk-taking programming on ideas that impact us all. This collaborative initiative reaches across the arts and sciences to design experiences that animate pressing issues of our time and instigate new ways to examine our world through live performance, the visual and literary arts, and thoughtful conversation. The program's first program series, *Strange Times: Earth in the Age of the Human* (2017) provides a great resources for this collaborative effort.
- Center for PostNatural History, an innovative storefront museum in Pittsburgh that collects specimens of organisms that have been intentionally and heritably altered by human beings. It was founded by Richard Pell, Associate Professor of Art at CMU.
- Phipps Conservatory's mission is to inspire and educate all with the beauty and importance of plants; to advance sustainability and promote human and environmental well-being through action and research; and to celebrate its historic glasshouse. It's Executive Director, Richard Piacentini, is a local leader in sustainability and preservation thinking.

- The Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium’s Science and Conservation Program conducts progressive and innovative projects while engaging and supporting stakeholders on wildlife conservation directives. By developing novel approaches to pressing issues, the program continues to successfully incorporate local communities into long-term sustainability of critical conservation efforts.
- National Aviary. The National Aviary conducts extensive conservation efforts and conducts research on the how human population and resource consumption affects birds and the environment.
- City of Asylum provides sanctuary to endangered literary writers, so that their voices are not silenced. Their work testifies to present and past injustice by memorializing experiences of it in literature.
- Rivers of Steel is dedicated to heritage development, community partnership, and reverence for the region’s natural and shared resources. Rivers of Steel has extensive experience thinking about the preservation of the Mon Valley’s steel and related cultural and material heritage, especially through its operation of the Carrie Furnaces.
- Bricolage Production Company is a locally-based immerse theater group. Its recent production of Dodo, at the Carnegie Museums Oakland campus, grappled with issues of extinction in the anthropocene.
- We will work with our colleagues at local universities, including CMU (Center for Ethics and Policy (Dir. Alex London), Center for Arts in Society (Dir. James Duesing), and the Humanities Center (Dir. Davis Shumway)), Duquesne (Center for Interpretive and Qualitative Research (Dir. Fred Evans)), and Chatham (Falk School of Sustainability and Environment (Dean Peter Walker)).

## *7. Preliminary Plan*

### ***Year Zero (planning year, 2018-19)***

We envision a series of lunchtime conversations, one hosted by each of the three Centers that anchor this initiative (GSC, WHC, and CGCRC), to bring together a core local group of Pitt and CMU faculty and graduate students and additional local stakeholders. This group will develop a shared sense of mission, further articulate the themes of the seminar, identify high priority invitees, and develop an advertisement and recruitment plan for the postdoctoral fellow.

The centerpiece of the Sawyer Seminar is a series of eight seminar sessions. Each one will feature three visitors: a scientist (*Wissenschaftler*, from the humanities, social or natural sciences), a policy-maker or activist, and an artist or curator. Each seminar will be a two hour



conversation between the visitors, the conveners, and a larger group of local participants, facilitated by the postdoctoral fellow. There will be no formal paper presentations. Our goal is to host guided conversations, out of which we develop new language for discussing matters of loss and mortality, rather than to listen to experts sharing professional knowledge. We will request pre-circulated papers or other materials from visitors in advance of each seminar session.

Prior to each public seminar session, the postdoctoral fellow and the visitors will gather in a studio to record a podcast, which we will post on a seminar website. This will serve as a record of that month's theme, it will allow for global and asynchronous participation in the event; and moreover it will serve as a warm up session for our three visitors, an opportunity for them to get to know one another and to identify synergies and points of accord and disagreement prior to the seminar itself. This will make for a livelier public session. We anticipate that in addition to these two core activities around each seminar, our visitors will be on campus long enough that we can schedule small group meetings, class visits, performances, and other opportunities for them to enrich campus life and to benefit from their visits to Pitt.

In addition to the eight seminars featuring visitors, we are planning three events limited to local participants: an inaugural event at the beginning of the seminar year, a museum and heritage tour mid-year, and a wrap-up event at the end of the year to plan for next steps.

### ***Year One (seminar year, 2019-20)***

Summer Inauguration:

*August 2019:* a one-day inaugural workshop featuring local participants and stakeholders but no invited visitors. The objective of the event is to ensure that diverse local participants, facilitated by the postdoctoral fellow and the seminar conveners, become a cohort with a shared agenda of priority conversations. We will organize the workshop around shared pre-circulated readings by the upcoming visitors. That will also ensure that the seminar sessions with visitors will be as well-informed, productive, and welcoming as possible. We will aim to hold the event at a site like the 366 acre Eden Hall campus, the carbon-neutral net-zero home of the Chatham University Falk School of Sustainability in Butler County, or the Powdermill Nature Reserve of the Museum of Natural History.

Fall 2019 Seminars (as described in Section Two above)

*September 2019:* The Past and the Future

*October 2019* Losing Species

*November 2019* Losing Homes

*December 2019:* Losing Communities

*January 2020:* We pause halfway through the seminar year for an event, curated by the postdoctoral fellow, to allow local participants to visit museums and heritage institutions around Pittsburgh that hold exhibits and collections which bear on the topic of loss in the age of the Anthropocene. We anticipate a day for participants to share a breakfast, a bus tour to various sites to tour exhibits and to meet staff engaged in work related to conservation and memory, and a lunch. We expect that visits would include a diverse range of sites that engage with various aspects of our conversations about loss. These might include: the City of Asylum, Carnegie Museums, Phipps Conservatory, Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium, the National Aviary, Carrie Furnace, and the Center for PostNatural History.

Spring 2020 Seminars (as described in Section Two above):

*February:* Losing Ecosystems

*March:* Losing Societies

*April:* Losing Truth

*May:* Questioning Hope

Summer Reflection

*June 2020:* a post-seminar workshop and tour that allows the core local participants to reflect upon what we will have learned and to plan for next steps. Thinking about water, in its excess and lack, its cleanliness and pollution, will be a significant theme of the seminar. The complex history of Pittsburgh's rivers encapsulates many of the ideas we will be contemplating. We therefore envision that this event will include a session held on RiverQuest, a boat owned by the Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation which can be chartered for educational activities and tours of the human and ecological history of the region. We will also use this session to plan our year two activities to maintain the momentum of the seminar. This event will help facilitate the continuation of multiple collaborations that will have arisen over the course of our year together.

### ***Year Two (following seminar; 2020-21)***

In the year following the seminar, we will award the two PhD fellowships, drawing on the pool of students who have participated in the seminar. This model ensures that the students will have developed good working relationship with the seminar leaders, which we hope will enrich the mentoring the students receive during the fellowship year. While the primary purpose of the fellowship is for dissertation research and writing, the students will also contribute to the planning, creation, and editing of the commemorative volume. We also expect them to help us maintain momentum on related projects on campus and with local partners and to work to archive and preserve the conservations and artifacts generated by the seminar and related activities.

### **Budget Narrative**

We anticipate that after paying salary and benefits for a postdoctoral fellow and two graduate students, we will have a budget of approximately \$75,000 to program the seminar and related activities. This will fund the following activities:

- Eight seminar sessions x three guests per seminar x average \$2000 per guest for honorarium, travel and lodging = \$48,000
- Funds for eight seminar sessions with invited guests plus pre- and post-seminar workshops for Pittsburgh locals and January tour = \$12,700
  - Poster printing for each event @ \$100 x 11 = \$1100
  - Refreshments for each seminar session: catered finger foods lunch for 30 participants @ \$10 each x 8 sessions = \$2400
  - Catered continental breakfast and finger foods lunch for 30 participants for pre- and post-seminar workshops @ \$20 per person x 30 people x 2 events = \$1200
  - Restaurant dinners for visitors and local hosts = one dinner each after 8 seminars x 10 people per dinner x \$50 per dinner = \$4000
  - Funds for January 2020 museum and gallery visits. 20 participants x breakfast and lunch @ \$20/meal = \$800 + bus rental for a day of site visits @ \$1000 = \$1,800.

- Postdoctoral fellow budget for personal research and travel related to the seminar theme: \$5,000
- Web and graphic design: \$2,000
- Additional costs TBD: this could include honoraria for prominent visitors, small-scale staged performances or exhibits, book subvention costs, group transportation to off-campus events, et cetera: \$5,500.

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Wednesday 14 February 2018 email from Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research to Michael and Ruth

*The selection committee has now met to discuss the array of strong pre-proposals. I am sorry to have to tell you that your group's proposal was not selected to go forward as the institutional submission for the Sawyer Seminar on this occasion. The committee has asked me to extend its warm thanks to you and your collaborators for preparing a proposal on an important, fascinating project. We appreciate how much time, thought, and energy it takes to coordinate the conversations and put together the materials. I'd be eager to explore ways to support you in realizing a version of this project through other mechanisms. Might we follow up in person at a mutually convenient time?*

[Later that day, Michal email to the Associate Dean, cc: Ruth]

*disappointed, to be sure, but Ruth and I are committed to trying to make this happen, and we'd welcome the chance to sit down with you to discuss that.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Ah well. Shall we meet with [the Associate Dean] as he offers? It would be good to find a way to do this project somehow...*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*I'd say yes. Shall I write him to that effect?*

## **Chapter 2: Now what? In which we apply for more grants...**

Thursday 15 February 2018 Michael email to Ruth

*ran into [Pitt development person for Foundation relations] at lunch today, and she told me that [the Associate Dean] called her this morning and put her to work on finding funding for our project. She made very clear that they were really positive about it and seriously committed to finding funding for it. So, fingers crossed.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*That's really great news!*

[We omit a long string of emails in which general enthusiasm for finding funding is interspersed with the logistics of trying to schedule a meeting among Ruth, Michael, and the Associate Dean and development team, which stretch across five days until a meeting is set for 26 February at 3:30pm.]

Wednesday 7 March 2018 Michael email to the faculty who supported the Sawyer proposal:

*Dear all,*

*I meant to follow up with you sooner, but things have been hectic. As many of you may have heard by now, our Sawyer seminar proposal was not selected as the proposal that Pitt would put forward to the Mellon Foundation. BUT, we have received very positive feedback from [the Associate Dean] and Ruth and I met with him last week to discuss other options for funding the seminar (including ways to tweak it, possible cuts (e.g., to the grad student or post-doc positions), etc. We're working with his office and the Institutional Advancement people in hopes of finding other ways to make this happen.*

*Just fyi, I attach again the proposal as we managed to get it submitted; with two more weeks to gather your feedback and make further improvements, I'm confident we might have prevailed. In any case, Ruth and I are committed to pushing this forward by hook or by crook, and if you have any ideas on that front, please let us know. Otherwise, we'll keep you posted*

Tuesday 17 April 2018, excerpt of Michael email to Ruth re GSC's Title VI application

*4) I am going to try to build in money for something on the Anthropocene (placeholder for our Sawyer seminar). Another way to do that would be as a GAP project, in part. Which reminds me: were you able to write to [the Associate Dean and his team] with the grief piece and seek/prod an update on their fundraising?*

Wednesday 18 April 2018 Michael and Ruth meet for coffee (notes?)

Do we have any photos or other information here?

Wednesday 9 May 2018 Ruth email to Associate Dean and team, cc: Michael

*With the semester over and some breathing room, I'm writing to follow up on Michael's and my "Theory, History and Culture in an Epoch of Loss" proposal. We're pleased that you're still interested in helping to identify possible funding sources for moving this proposal forward, even though it was not selected for the Mellon Sawyer competition.*

*We continue to think that this is an important and timely topic. Here's a recent article that gets at some of the themes that we're hoping to explore:*

<https://theconversation.com/hope-and-mourning-in-the-anthropocene-understanding-ecological-grief-88630>.

*Are there any next steps that we can discuss at this stage? Would another meeting be helpful, or more information from us? Any tie-in to Year of Global or GRAD-PI?*

*FYI I'm attaching our original proposal.*

*Many thanks for continuing to think about this initiative,*

Thursday 10 May 2018 email from foundations/development contact to Ruth and Michael:

*I am happy to hear that you have some breathing room now that the semester is over. My associate Emily Witthohn and I did some research into prospects for your proposal. What we quickly learned, is that the seminar model is not one commonly seen in foundation funding priorities, which is part of what makes the A.W. Mellon's Sawyer Seminar program so unique.*

*Thank you for the link you shared, the article provided helpful context. In looking at the funders of the authors of the article, they seem to be primarily health agencies and academic/internal to their institution.*

*With all of that context in mind, we are happy to share the attached faculty questionnaire with you and your team. This questionnaire may help you reframe your thoughts and give us some tangible threads to follow to further research potential funders for this same content in a different format.*

Wednesday 23 May 2018, Michael and Ruth meet for a coffee to strategize

(notes?)

Monday 27 August 2018 Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation releases three RFPs for faculty

Monday 3 September 2018 Michael email to Ruth

*as you might have heard, GSC did NOT receive a Title VI grant this year. We don't yet have any feedback or information on what the DoE disliked about our proposal (which we believed was very strong). In any case, that means funding for everything is in flux.*

*With that in mind, I wonder what you think about going for the MCSI Pitt seed grant as a possible way to fund the Loss in the Anthropocene project. I think we wouldn't have to do much to our Sawyer proposal, and it would provide a way to get started as we work toward an eventual NEH proposal. Deadline is January, so plenty of time*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*I'm sorry to hear about the Title VI grant! That's distressing news, particularly in light of the amount of work that it took to prepare the application. I hope that you'll be able to sustain most of the work of Global Studies one way or another.*

*I think the MCSI application for Epoch of Loss is a great idea. As you know, also, I'll be doing the Cultural Studies grad seminar this spring, also using the Epoch of Loss theme. I've taken the course description more-or-less straight out of the Sawyer application. I'll be giving a talk next month, and I think Ron Zboray is asking you to be the discussant for it. That seminar also comes along with a budget to bring in three speakers for a spring mini-conference – with a decent honorarium and airfare from anywhere. I'm thinking about Thom Van Dooren (Flight Ways), Doreen Massey (because I'm also working in some cultural geography theory), and Raj Patel (End of Food, Seven Cheap Things). I'm open to other suggestions.*

*Happy to meet soon and scheme about Epoch of Loss and other matters related to Global Studies moving forward.*

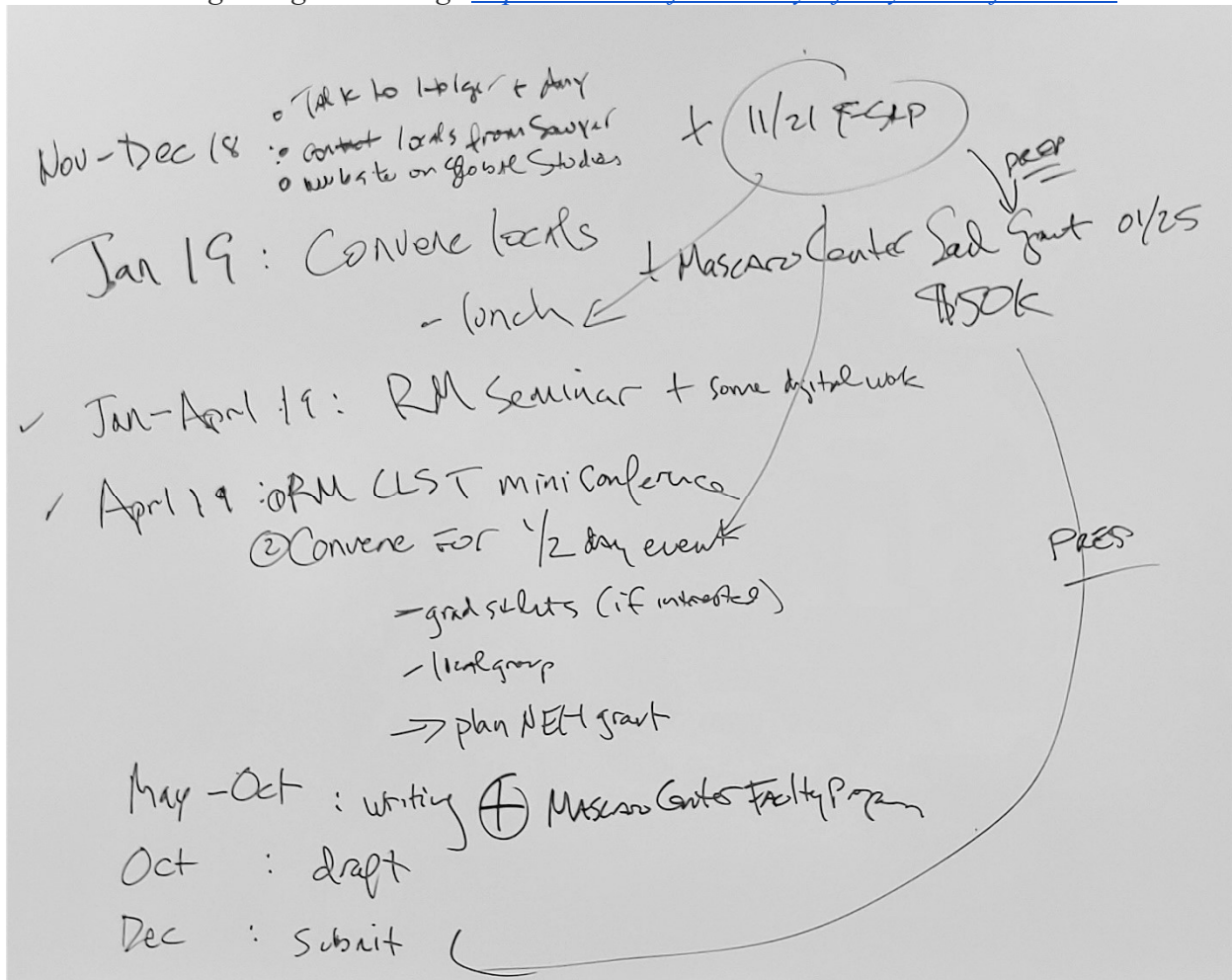
Friday 30 November 2018 Ruth email to Michael

*I'm attaching the picture I took of the whiteboard in the WHC office when we last met to brainstorm about Epoch of Loss planning. I'm mindful that we let the 11/21 FSRP deadline pass by. I saw it come and go on my calendar, and I was in no position to chase it. I assume the same goes for you.*

*However, I would definitely like to get to the next items on our list: the \$50K Mascaro Center Seed Grant due on 1/25, and a January lunch with local stakeholders (to that group I would like to add X from the Y program at CMU, who I had a great talk with recently at a Mascaro Center. I assume we can find some funding for that lunch from WHC and Global Studies budgets. As I finalize the syllabus for my CLST class (rough draft attached), I would also like to figure out how to stitch in whatever it is that you and I are scheming this spring.*

So – with the semester coming to a close, do you have any time coming up to think about next steps? I'm in town over break except between Christmas and New Years. Next week is looking impacted, but I am gloriously free after that. I could meet Monday 10<sup>th</sup> before 2, Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> before noon, and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> before 1:30. If not any of those times, we can plan for the week of the 17<sup>th</sup>, pretty much any time/place, if you're around, and maybe connected up with a dinner with spouses and possibly others?

And this morning's elegiac reading: <https://torontolife.com/city/life/my-beautiful-death/>



Monday 3 December 2018 email from Michael to Ruth:

*I actually sat down to get something in for the FRSP, then realized I needed a letter from my chair, and that sunk it. I should have realized this was required, but... I didn't.*

*Yes, let's meet on the 10th, sometime before 2. We could have lunch, or meet in the morning sometime. I have a weekly meeting with Veronica at that time, but she's usually flexible and I can move it around.*

*thanks also for sharing these docs!*

Monday 10 December 2018, a lunch meeting, with the following agenda:

*Epoch of Loss Seminar Series Planning Schedule*

1. December or January 2018: talk to Holger and Amy about plans
2. December 2018: contact the locals who were named in the Sawyer proposal
3. December 2018: Make a simple web page on Global Studies
4. Mid-January 2019: convene locals for a planning lunch
5. January 25, 2019: \$50K Mascaro Center Seed Grant Due
6. January-April 2019: Mostern CLST 2012 Seminar
7. April 10-11 and April 17-18, 2019: CLST Symposium
  - a. Convene the locals for a half-day event in conjunction, including the visitors and the CLST students (if interested) for the purpose of planning for an NEH grant submission.
8. May-October 2019: Prepare NEH grant and execute Mascaro Seed Grant activities
9. October 2019: submit NEH draft for review and feedback
10. December 2019: submit NEH application

Wednesday 2 January 2019 Michael email to Phipps Conservatory:

*Allow me to introduce myself: I am Michael Goodhart, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Global Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh. Along with my colleague Ruth Mostern, Director of the World History Center (copied here), I'm working to inaugurate an ambitious new project that we hope will bring together people from across Pittsburgh and beyond in an important and timely conversation about the losses we collectively face as catastrophic climate transformation takes hold. (Please see the project description below [ed. – pls see description posted below for 3 January 2019].) It's an important part of this project that we engage not only scholars but also diverse members of our community who are deeply engrossed in these questions, including our partners at places like Phipps, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium, the Center for Post-Natural History, Bricolage, the Sierra Club, and many others.*

*I'm writing because I know B is very interested in such questions, and we hope that he (or an appropriate representative from the Phipps) will be interested in joining a planning session we're organizing for this month, where we hope to convene people interested in helping us to define, revise, and advance this project as we put together applications for funding. Also, because we're hoping to disrupt the usual academic approach to such questions, we want to make every effort to get people outside of their zones of comfort and familiarity in hopes of stimulating new and productive thinking about these issues.*



*To that end, we were very much hoping that the Phipps might be willing to host our inaugural lunch meeting for this group in the Tropical Forest and Special Events Hall and that B or another representative might be able to attend. (I am contacting the Events Planning team separately about securing the Hall.) The dates we have in mind are Thursday January 24, Friday January 25, Thursday January 31, and Friday February 1, and I wanted to check whether any of those dates might work for Richard, if he's interested.*

*Sorry, this is already long, so I'll stop here. if you have any questions, please let me know.*

[B ultimately participated in the lunch event. Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*I decided not to ask Phipps to comp the room in this message, as you've seen. It's only \$480 for a non-profit for a two-hour rental (plus lunch). Didn't seem like enough money to burn the ask at this point. I'd rather get Richard there and excited about the project. I can find the \$480 in the GSC budget or use my personal research funds.*

*I think we decided to set a date and then invite people, correct? Rather than trying to do a poll? I added one date we hadn't discussed (Jan. 31), only because I've been called to a 2pm ad hoc for a tenure case on the 24th. Let me know if that's no good for you (the 31st).*

Thursday 3 January 2019 email from Michael to Ruth:

*we've reached out to Phipps -- they have Jan 25 and Jan 31 available at noon for a two hour lunch meeting. We've held both times (for now) but need to let them know by the end of the day tomorrow. Do you have a preference? I think Friday might be better for people, given teaching schedules, etc. I'm also still hoping to hear back from R (I just wrote again to his assistant). Phipps is sending over a catering menu, and we can go over that if you like, or we can just decide on something. (I think we should go vegetarian if not vegan, given the theme, but I'm open to persuasion on this).*

*Also, I've attached a revised "short description" of the project that I'd like to put on the website, once you've approved. It's an edited and slightly updated version of the overview section of our pre-proposal Sawyer draft.*

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### ***The Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss***

Present discussions about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system—transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems—focus largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. After all, the continued existence of human life on earth may in fact depend upon efforts to geoengineer the atmosphere or the reefs, and it is understandable that we wish to protect the remaining members of beloved nonhuman species. Yet scientifically-oriented discussions about the urgency of averting or mitigating climate transformation have proven politically ineffective, with environmental concerns remaining secondary or tertiary despite the heroic efforts of committed activists.

Meanwhile, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing from the map; millennia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth; the streets of Miami already flood on sunny days at high tide as a result of rising sea levels. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch. To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? How can excellent and constructive science and policy-making coexist with the acceptance that there will be profound loss? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? How might reflection on loss prove politically productive where consideration of science has fallen short? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

We are assembling an interdisciplinary group of scholars, activists, artists, curators, policy-makers and writers from on and beyond our campus to explore these issues. We want to explore the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss. We aim to develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss and to explore their political potentiality.

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[Later that day (3 January 2019), Ruth email to Michael]

*I have a fairly strong preference for the 31<sup>st</sup> – there’s a noon hiring-related meeting in History and a visitor to the Asian Studies Center I would like to see on the 25<sup>th</sup> – but if the 25<sup>th</sup> is better for you or others, I can make it work.*

*I agree about making the meal vegan – I hadn’t thought about that, but I’m intrigued by the idea that we should plan our own events and hospitality around this theme in accordance with its content – great idea.*

*I’ll read the short description and get back to you. Also, I had a meeting with A right before break and he had some extremely useful feedback about how we should pitch our Mascaro application. Essentially, they won’t approve a full-on elegiac downer application, but as long as we can write in some role for engineering (this need not be too happy; it can be useful witness-bearing, like sensors to measure the collapse of the ice caps or the aquifers), we can make it work. I’ll send you more note about that.*

*I hope your recovery from knee surgery is proceeding apace,*

[Later that day, after we’ve settled on the 31<sup>st</sup>, Ruth to Michael:]

*The short description for the website is great – by all means post it.*

*I'm attaching two sets of notes. The first is from the last meeting that you and I had before the break, and the second is from my meeting with A. For now these are a bit of a "brain dump - we'll need to make some practical plans about how to prepare for the lunch (invitations, etc) and what we want to do with the Mascaro application (perhaps including a follow-up conversation with A). I'm happy to meet on campus if you're mobile, or otherwise to talk by Skype or come to your house – whatever works.*

Wednesday 9 January 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*1) Anthropocene tab is up on the GSC page! we can add events, announcements, faculty bios, etc. easily as those come online.*

*2) I've got a google doc called "lunch invitation" which I've shared with you. Please check it out. Once you've reviewed / made changes, I can send out the invitations. Ideally before the weekend.*

*3) started mucking around with a grant proposal -- just spitballing, mostly drawing on our previous application. Please change anything! I'm fine to work in google docs for now, if that's OK with you...*

*We should also probably submit for the Chancellor's Seed grant, just in case. Letter of intent due Feb 8/submission March 8, so the Mascaro will be done by then. No reason not to toss something in.*

*I'm wondering if we should make a date to sit down together to work out certain aspects of it. One possibility is Monday Jan 21, MLK day -- this is a holiday so I'm blissfully free -- we could meet at a coffee shop. That gives us the rest of that week to finalize the proposal. I'm open to other dates, times, places as your schedule permits*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*This is great! I will look at the grant proposal and lunch invitation docs. I'm heading out of town to a workshop on Friday/Saturday (for which I am not at all prepared yet, and I need to prioritize that first), but I will work on this Sunday/Monday at the latest – and hopefully before.*

*Meeting MLK Day sounds great. I'm free till 3. We'd better make good headway on the Mascaro before that remotely, since it's due the 24<sup>th</sup>, but that should work.*

*Thanks for getting started on all this. I'm attaching the syllabus for my CLST class, which includes links and references to a great many interesting sources, projects and people that I was not aware of when we worked on this last spring. I will hold class for the first time this evening*

[syllabus for Ruth's CLST seminar follows

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**CLST 2050: Cultural Studies Common Seminar:  
The Sense of Place in an Epoch of Loss  
Professor Ruth Mostern  
University of Pittsburgh Department of History  
Spring 2019**

**Meeting Time and Place**

- Wednesday 6:00-8:30pm CL 402E
- Office hours Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 and by appointment in WWPH 3534
- Email: [rmostern@pitt.edu](mailto:rmostern@pitt.edu) | Twitter [@ruthmostern](https://twitter.com/ruthmostern)

**Course Description**

“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds...An ecologist...must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.” - Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

“As rising sea levels alter the outlines of continents, as islands, forests and ice caps vanish and deserts and urban edgelands spread, as landmarks familiar for thousands of years are literally wiped off the map (and new ones take their place), how do we locate ourselves and find our directions onward? How do we find permanence when the terra is shifting under our feet?” - Dark Mountain, *TERRA*

“The end of the world as we know it is not the end of the world full stop. Together, we will find the hope beyond hope, the paths which lead us to the unknown world ahead of us.” - Dark Mountain, “Uncivilization: The Dark Mountain Manifesto”

This seminar explores the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss. Through the activity of the seminar, we will aim to develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss. At present, discussion about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system -- transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems -- focuses largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. However, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration. To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational crisis? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

This seminar will explore these questions in part by theorizing the concept of place, the lens through which humans name and make meaning about the world. People name the locations of homes, from which some of us may be displaced forever. Place is a key concept for non-human species as well. Fish return to ancestral spawning grounds, and when they are blocked by dams, entire populations are destroyed. We will contemplate how to use the concepts of place and

spatial and temporal scale as ways to understand the scope and impact of loss, and how to use place as a focus for remembrance.

The seminar should appeal to two overlapping groups of students. Some may wish to focus primarily on the conceptual tools that spatial theory can bring to bear on a wide range of research questions. Others may wish to read works that offer strategies for how to pause and contemplate the nature and degree of the upheaval that is now coming clearly into view. This seminar is intended to offer frameworks for both of those intertwined areas of inquiry.

### Course Requirements

Your grade for the semester will reflect the courage and commitment of your participation in the seminar and the quality and originality of the work you submit.

#### Required Course Texts

- *Week 2:* Thom Van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014) [978-0231166195]
- *Week 3:* Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (University of Minnesota Press, 1977) [978-0816638772]
- *Week 4:* Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005) [978-1412903622]
- *Week 5:* Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013) [978-0816689231]
- *Week 6:* Roy Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections of the End of a Civilization* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2015) [978-0872866690]
- *Week 7:* Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (Polity, 2017) [978-0745684345]
- *Week 8:* Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (University of Chicago Press, 2016) [978-0226526812]
- *Week 9:* Deborah Bird Rose, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (University of Virginia Press, 2013) [978-0813933597]
- *Week 10:* Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Destruction* (Harvard University Press, 2008) [978-0674027466]
- *Week 11:* Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton University Press, 2015) [978-0691178325]
- *Week 12:* Richard Powers, *The Overstory: A Novel* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2018) [978-0393635522]

#### Writing

1. **By 10:00 am each Wednesday**, please submit a two-page paper which responds to the readings that we will be discussing that week, and which optionally links those readings to your project and your research interests. We will use the Discussion Board platform on Courseweb for this purpose so that we can all read one another's papers and incorporate ideas from them in our discussion.

2. On **January 16**, please submit an informal prospectus for a final paper or project. Your project may take whatever form and include whatever content is most useful to you so long as you engage with our common reading in some fashion and include at least 15 pages of writing or the equivalent in another medium. (For example, you may complete a research paper, a piece of

creative writing, a podcast, or an interactive digital map.) On **March 6**, submit a midterm report about your progress on the project. By **April 10**, **April 17**, or **April 18** (depending on your assigned group), submit a working draft of a final paper or project, and on **April 24**, submit the final version.

### Common Seminar Colloquium

During our regularly scheduled class time on **April 10**, **April 17**, or during a specially scheduled session on **April 18**, you will present a version of your final project at the annual Common Seminar Colloquium. This event is open to the university community and wider public. At the colloquium, one of the Annual Cultural Studies Distinguished Guest Lecturers will provide commentary on your paper. The floor is then opened to questions from other seminar participants and the audience. Our Guest Lecturers will also deliver plenary lectures. Our guests are:

- **April 10:** Introductory Plenary Lecture by Political Ecologist Stephanie Kane (<https://hls.indiana.edu/faculty/directory/kane-stephanie.html>). Reception: 12:30-1:00 | Lecture: 1:00-1:45 | Q & A: 1:45-2:15 | Colloquium: 6:00-8:30
- **April 17:** Mid Conference Plenary Lecture by Environmental Philosopher Kim De Wolff (<http://philosophy.unt.edu/people/kim-de-wolff>). Reception: 12:30-1:00 | Lecture: 1:00-1:45 | Q & A: 1:45-2:15 | Colloquium: 6:00-8:30
- **April 18:** Concluding Plenary Lecture by Archeoastronomer James Rock ([http://pieducators.com/wisdom/jim\\_rock](http://pieducators.com/wisdom/jim_rock)). Colloquium: 1:00-3:00 | Reception: 5:00-5:30 | Lecture: 5:30-6:15 | Q & A: 6:15-6:45

### Lead Class

You will each present material and guide discussion once during the semester. A good presentation:

- Occupies 15 minutes or so of class time.
- Includes an overview of the assigned material and its main conclusions or positions, draws connections between multiple assigned readings, provides an overview of the argument and conclusions of each reading, and relates the readings to the goals and themes of the course.
- Poses questions or examples, grounded in readings and exercises, that spark lively discussion about significant ideas.
- Often includes a limited quantity of well-designed visual material that helps to make your presentation more comprehensible.

### Participation

Seminar discussion is one of the most important practices of the humanities and social sciences. To participate successfully, you must be consistently involved in all aspects of class, which means that you attend class every week, complete work when it is assigned, and actively join in insightful discussion of course concepts. Through discussion, you gain practice in thinking through problems and organizing concepts, formulating arguments and counterarguments, testing your ideas in a public setting, evaluating the evidence for your own and others' positions, and responding thoughtfully and critically to diverse points of view. For that reason, we must be able to explore difficult and complex ideas together – to test ideas, rethink assumptions, and react to new perspectives. Your participation has ramifications for our whole intellectual community.

I expect everybody to participate in ways that enhance and enrich discussion and intellectual exchange. In particular:

- Be specific and focus on passages and concepts from the readings.
- Keep your remarks succinct so that all students can join the conversation.
- Call people in rather than out and assume that everyone has an open mind and good faith.
- Embrace what you do not know and rethink your convictions when appropriate.
- Ask questions that enhance dialogue and deepen understanding.
- Inform me promptly if you have a concern about me or a conflict with a classmate.

One theme of this seminar is to explore the place of strong emotions like grief and anger in an academic setting. I aspire to make this classroom a place of tenderness and vulnerability that is safe for emotion as an integral part of our practice.

[Required University policies have been omitted here]

## **UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION**

### ***Week 1 – January 9: INTRODUCTION***

- Naomi Klein, “Season of Smoke,” *The Intercept* (September 9, 2017) [<https://theintercept.com/2017/09/09/in-a-summer-of-wildfires-and-hurricanes-my-son-asks-why-is-everything-going-wrong/>]
- David Wallace-Wells, “UN Says Climate Genocide is Coming. It’s Actually Worse than That,” *New York Magazine* (October 10, 2018) [<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/10/un-says-climate-genocide-coming-but-its-worse-than-that.html>]
- Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger,” *Women's Studies Quarterly* 25.1-2 (1981). [PDF on Courseweb]
- Jenny Zhang, “Powerful Self-Portraits Reveal Artist’s Descent into Alzheimer’s Disease,” *My Modern Met* (August 11, 2014) [<https://mymodernmet.com/william-utermohlen-alzheimers-self-portraits>]
- Gillian Genser, “My Beautiful Death,” *Toronto Life* (November 28, 2018) [<https://torontolife.com/city/life/my-beautiful-death>]

### ***Week 2 – January 16: The Edge of Extinction***

- Thom Van Dooren, *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014)
- Edward Burtynsky, “Anthropocene” (2018) [<https://www.edwardburtynsky.com/projects/photographs/Anthropocene>]

*Prospectus for final project due.*

## **UNIT 2: A SENSE OF PLACE**

### ***Week 3 – January 23: Home***

- Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (University of Minnesota Press, 1977)

- Excerpts from Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1962) and Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac* (1949) TBD
- Zadie Smith, “Elegy for a Country’s Seasons,” *New York Review of Books* (April 3, 2014) [PDF on Courseweb]
- Warsan Shire, “Home” [[http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/lesson\\_1\\_-\\_home-poem-by-warsan-shire.pdf](http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/lesson_1_-_home-poem-by-warsan-shire.pdf)]

#### **Week 4 – January 30: Scale**

- Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005)
- Sing Chew, *The Recurring Dark Ages: Ecological Stress, Climate Changes, and System Transformation* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2007), Chapter 1: “System Crisis” [PDF on Courseweb]
- Craig Allen, David Angeler, Ahjond Garmestani, Lance Gunderson, and C. S. Holling, “Panarchy: Theory and Application,” *Ecosystems* (2014), 17:578-589. [PDF on Courseweb]
- Erik Swyngedouw, “Technocultural Revolutions: The Scalar Politics of Franco’s Hydro-Social Dream for Spain, 1939-1975,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 32.1 (2007), 9-28. [PDF on Courseweb]

#### **Week 5 – February 6: Hyperobjects**

- Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013)
- Nancy Campbell, Charlotte Du Cann and Nick Hunt, “Terra Non Firma,” *Dark Mountain: Issue 14 – TERRA* (2018) [<https://dark-mountain.net/dark-mountain-issue-14-terra/>]
- Margaret Wickens Pierce and Stephen Hornsby, “Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names in Canada,” (Orono, Maine: Canadian American Center, 2017) [<https://umaine.edu/canam/publications/coming-home-map/>] [PDF on Courseweb]

### **UNIT 3: AN EPOCH OF LOSS**

#### **Week 6 – February 13: Learning to Die**

- Roy Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections of the End of a Civilization* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2015)
- Jem Bendell, “Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy,” *IFLAS Occasional Paper 2* (July 27, 2018) [PDF on Courseweb]
- Paul Kingsnorth and Dougald Hine, “Uncivilization: The Dark Mountain Manifesto” (Dark Mountain Project, 2009) [<https://dark-mountain.net/about/manifesto/>]

#### **Week 7 – February 20: Facing Gaia**

- Isabelle Stengers, *In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism* (Open Humanities Press, 2015) [PDF on Courseweb]
- Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (Polity, 2017)

#### **Week 8 – February 27: “It is Easier to Imagine the End of the World Than it is to Imagine the End of Capitalism”**



- Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (University of Chicago Press, 2016)
- Jason Moore, “The Capitalocene, Part I: On the Nature and Origins of our Ecological Crisis,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44.3 (2017), 594-630; and “The Capitalocene Part II: Accumulation by Appropriation and the Centrality of Unpaid Work/Energy,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 45.2 (2018), 237-279. [PDFs on Courseweb]
- Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Cthulucene* (Duke University Press, 2016), Chapter 2: “Tentacular Thinking: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Cthulucene,” 30-57 [PDF on Courseweb]
- Nathan Robinson, “What Goes Up in Flames,” *Current Affairs* (September 3, 2018) [<https://www.currentaffairs.org/2018/09/what-goes-up-in-flames>]
- Fredric Jameson, “Future City,” *New Left Review* 21 (May-June 2003), 65-79. [PDF on Courseweb]

### **Week 9 – March 6: Extinction**

- Deborah Bird Rose, *Wild Dog Dreaming: Love and Extinction* (University of Virginia Press, 2013)
- Elizabeth Kolbert, “The Sixth Extinction?” *The New Yorker* (May 25, 2009) and “How to Write about a Vanishing World,” *The New Yorker* (October 15, 2018) [PDFs on Courseweb]
- Chris Jordan, “Midway: Message from the Gyre” (2009-present) [<http://www.chrisjordan.com/gallery/midway/#CF000313%2018x24>]
- Peruse the Extinction Studies Working Group website at <http://extinctionstudies.org/>

*Midterm report on final project due.*

### **SPRING BREAK March 11-15**

### **UNIT 4: GRIEF AND RADICAL HOPE**

### **Week 10 – March 20: The History of the End of the World**

- Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008)
- Audra Mitchell, “Lifework” (September 14, 2016), “Lifework Part II” (April 9, 2017), “Decolonizing Against Extinction, Part III: White Tears and Mourning” (December 14, 2017) *Worldly* [<https://worldlyir.wordpress.com/>]
- Luis Pedraja, “Eschatology and Hope,” in Orlando Espin, *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology* (John Wiley and Sons, 2015), 231-249. [ProQuest eBook through PittCat]
- Otto Friedrich, *The End of the World: A History* (Fromm International, 1986), excerpts TBD

### **Week 11 – March 27: Living on a Damaged Planet**

- Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton University Press, 2017)
- Neville Ellis and Ashlee Cunsolo, “Hope and Mourning in the Anthropocene: Understanding Ecological Grief,” *The Conversation* (April 4, 2018) [PDF on Courseweb]

- Anna Tsing, Nils Bubandt, Elaine Gan and Heather Ann Swanson, eds., *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, excerpts TBD

March 18: Talk by Jason Moore, “Spaceships, Slaveships, and the Capitalocene Imaginary,” 4:30 to 6:00, History Department Lounge, 3703 Posvar Hall

***Week 12 – April 3: The Overstory***

- Richard Powers, *The Overstory: A Novel* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2018)

**UNIT 5: PRESENTATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

***Week 13 – April 10: Presentations***

- **April 10:** Introductory Plenary Lecture by Political Ecologist Stephanie Kane (<https://hls.indiana.edu/faculty/directory/kane-stephanie.html>). Reception: 12:30-1:00 | Lecture: 1:00-1:45 | Q & A: 1:45-2:15 | Colloquium: 6:00-8:30

April 16: Talk by James Scott, 25th Annual E. P. Thompson Lecture, 4:30 to 6:00, title and venue TBA

***Week 14 – April 17: Presentations***

- **April 17:** Mid Conference Plenary Lecture by Environmental Philosopher Kim De Wolff (<http://philosophy.unt.edu/people/kim-de-wolff>). Reception: 12:30-1:00 | Lecture: 1:00-1:45 | Q & A: 1:45-2:15 | Colloquium: 6:00-8:30
- **April 18:** Concluding Plenary Lecture by Archeoastronomer James Rock ([http://pieducators.com/wisdom/jim\\_rock](http://pieducators.com/wisdom/jim_rock)). Colloquium: 1:00-3:00 | Reception: 5:00-5:30 | Lecture: 5:30-6:15 | Q & A: 6:15-6:45

***Week 15 – April 24: Wrap Up Potluck***

Final project due.

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[Later that day (9 January 2019) Michael email to Ruth]

*Ruth, GREAT. Don't worry for now about the grant proposal doc -- just look at the lunch invitation. That needs to go out this week, before people get too busy. It's just a list of invitees and a short email -- the rest is borrowed from the pre-proposal. Only should take you 10 minutes. the rest can wait. And yes, let's make good headway remotely before the 21st. I think the grant is due the 25th, but either way, we'll need to be mopping up by then. We could meet somewhere at noon and have lunch and work...*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Okay, done! A bit of a rush, but I think ready to go,*

Tuesday 15 January 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*[subject line: “very interesting”] program at Shambala. I know Michelle King -- should I invite her to lunch?*

<https://pittsburgh.shambhala.org/2019/01/11/silent-transformations-ecological-destruction-as-spiritual-practice/>

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Yes, that would be great! I have been thinking about bringing a meditation practice to this conversation – exactly along the lines of this event. Very exciting.*

Friday 11 January 2019 email from Michael – the Lunch Invitation. (Parts of the background section are lifted directly from the Sawyer proposal. We include this material as part of the palimpsest of this project.)

*Dear Colleagues,*

*We write to invite you to join us for a lunchtime brainstorming and planning session for a new research project we are launching: **Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss**. The event will take place on Thursday January 31 from noon-2pm at the Special Events Hall of the Phipps Conservatory.*

*Many of you were familiar with the Sawyer Seminar proposal we drafted on this theme last year; we are now seeking seed funding from various sources to prepare for a major NEH publication grant to enable us to carry the project forward.*

*We want to think with you at this early stage about the project and its potential:*

- *for advancing a nascent but vitally important conversation about loss as a feature of life in the Anthropocene*
- *for involving a wildly interdisciplinary mix of university faculty and community members in this conversation*
- *for learning about how people throughout history and around the world have imagined and coped with “world-endings”*
- *for reconceptualizing how architecture, design, and engineering can help us to identify, quantify, and manage loss*
- *for creating events and outputs that range from traditional scholarly works to art, film, literature, and community events of all kinds.*

*Below you can read more about the thinking that animates the project and some of the directions we’re considering.*

*We ask that you please [RSVP](#) by **January 22** so that we can have an accurate count for lunch.*

*Yours,  
Michael Goodhart  
Ruth Mostern*

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## **Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss**

### **Overview**

Present discussions about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system—transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems—focus largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. After all, the continued existence of human life on earth may in fact depend upon efforts to geoengineer the atmosphere or the reefs, and it is understandable that we wish to protect the remaining members of beloved nonhuman species. Yet scientifically-oriented discussions about the urgency of averting or mitigating climate transformation have proven politically ineffective, with environmental concerns remaining secondary or tertiary despite the heroic efforts of committed activists.

Meanwhile, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing from the map; millennia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth; the streets of Miami already flood on sunny days at high tide as a result of rising sea levels. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch.

To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? How can excellent and constructive science and policy-making coexist with the acceptance that there will be profound loss? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? How might reflection on loss prove politically productive where consideration of science has fallen short? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

We are assembling an interdisciplinary group of scholars, activists, artists, curators, policy-makers and writers from on and beyond our campus to explore these issues. We want to explore the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss. We aim to develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss and to explore their political potentiality.

### **Background**

It is impossible to predict the effects of anthropogenic climate change with any precision, but by all indications they will be severe. One prominent feature is that of loss – of species, environments, and sites of human meaning and memory. Already this loss is evident in massive and accelerating species extinction and growing climate-related conflict and migration. Intense warming and acidification of the oceans has led to the destruction of nineteen percent of coral reefs and an additional fifteen percent could be dead within fifteen years. Some ecologists warn

that if global warming continues unchecked, all corals could be extinct within a century. Elizabeth Kolbert's bestselling *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (2015) draws popular attention to the cataclysmic contraction of diversity of life on earth through which we are now living while works of fiction, such as Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* (2013) dramatize the human impact of the experience of loss. Fires, floods, droughts and superstorms are stretching and breaking social life from Indonesia to Puerto Rico. Behind warfare and refugee flight in Syria lie the "slow violence" (per literary theorist Rob Nixon) of agricultural collapse in an increasingly hot and dry land. Theorists and planners, reviving dire Cold War rhetoric, talk of sacrifice zones.

Most scholars and activists have, understandably and appropriately, focused on efforts to educate the populace about the severity of the threat in hopes of averting a catastrophic temperature increase of more than two degrees Celsius. Scientists likewise concentrate on documenting the present, modeling the future, and seeking potential mitigation. However, recent studies suggest that the chances of limiting temperature rise to below two degrees are slim. The targets adopted in the Paris Accord, for instance, would yield closer to a 2.5 degree increase or higher, and a UN report released last month predicts that the Paris limits will be exceeded by 2040. In such a scenario, sea levels could rise 12 meters or more, displacing hundreds of millions of people from their homes and threatening the viability of human societies. Moreover, tipping point phenomena, such as the melting of the Greenland or Antarctic ice sheets or the thawing of permafrost could trigger changes that would unleash even more catastrophic temperature increases.

In response, growing numbers of policy-oriented scholars have begun to focus on resiliency; that is, on the ways in which societies might adapt to changes of this magnitude. However, humanists and artists are just beginning to attend to appropriate modes of theorizing the trauma of ecological transformation, the attendant fact of loss, and the ways in which we might preserve, remember, and memorialize that which will be lost. Examples of such signal works include philosopher Thom Van Dooren's *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (2016) and creative essayist Roy Scranton's *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization* (2015).

These and related works offer the framework for our proposed Sawyer Seminar, which will engage humanists, social scientists, natural scientists, engineers, artists, curators, conservationists, and activists around questions like: How should we begin to think about think about the imminent disappearance of massive numbers of species and our role in precipitating it? How can we appropriately record and collectively acknowledge these losses? How have people in the past dealt with climate change and environmental catastrophe? How can we take responsibility for and bear witness to the profound human suffering that will ensue? What modes of cultural expression befit such a time of loss, and what role can the arts play in helping us to acknowledge, mourn, and survive this loss? Can we afford the time to grieve our collective losses when there is so much practical work to be done?

Our goal is to avoid the language of sustainability and resilience. While these concepts are of urgent importance, foregrounding the search for solutions has also functioned as a mode of deflection. The relentless focus on solutions and mitigation reflects the dominant political,

economic and cultural impulses of contemporary (neoliberal) capitalist societies: a refusal of responsibility for ecological disaster based in denial and made possible through the well-financed lies and obfuscations peddled by corporations enriched by the carbon economy and enabled by the limited capacity of economically precarious people to pay attention, learn the truth, and mobilize in defense of their homes and societies and of the ecosystems that support them.

This focus makes it difficult to pause and contemplate the nature and degree of the upheaval now coming clearly into view, and it discourages the acknowledgment of and reckoning with loss. Our hope is to imagine how we might appropriately recognize, acknowledge, and process this loss in ways that can contribute to our collective ethical and spiritual survival.

### **Themes**

Again, the overarching theme of this project is loss. Several subsidiary themes help to flesh out our concerns.

- Commemoration and elegy. How can we develop new modes of thinking and reflection on loss: what's required to recognize, accept, and process loss in ways that make it visible rather than denying, obscuring or diminishing it through the pursuit of recovery or mitigation.
- Power. The impact and experience of loss is mediated through power. While some types of loss -- of species, or of ecosystems -- affect everyone, they do not affect everyone in the same ways or to the same extent. The losses people experience and the impact of those losses on their lives will be determined by their social positions. The rich will suffer fewer losses than the poor, and those they suffer will be cushioned in various ways; women and men will be differently affected by similar forms of loss. Additionally, the accessibility of certain modes of commemoration -- from cultural forms like theater and museums to virtual reality and other technologies -- will be conditioned by power as well.
- Communication. Loss is a difficult concept and reality, one that resides near the limits of familiarity and knowability. How can the idea and the experience of loss be conveyed effectively to the diverse human family? What kind of language is needed to convey it? Can such a language be politically effective? The challenge here includes but surpasses interdisciplinarity, as it affects people far beyond the university -- including, crucially, people directly impacted by loss and people directly involved in activities of elegy and commemoration (e.g., actually displaced people, museums and memory institutions, natural conservation organizations).
- Connection. The loss we are concerned with is at once present and epochal, material and spiritual, local and global. It is fundamentally relational -- that is, to do with our connections with one another and with the past and the future. How can we expand, sustain, and theorize these connections? What can we learn from studying how others have thought about "world-endings" in the past?

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Monday 14 January 2019 – a colleague shared with us this announcement:



Organized by the Climate Adaptation Initiative at Columbia University's Earth Institute, this first ever conference on managed retreat will address a range of issues facing coastal communities in the United States and around the world as sea levels rise and coastal flooding becomes more frequent and intense.

Abstract submissions may cover a number of topics, from exposure, hazard and risk, to societal response, planning and governance. We look forward to participation from academics, planners, practitioners and industry representatives. While the primary focus will be on coastal issues, abstracts are welcome that speak to other regions and associated hazards, such as drought, fire, heat stress and inland flooding.

The conference will take place June 19-21, 2019 on Columbia University's Morningside campus. More details can be found on the conference website. Stay tuned for further details on registration and conference programming.

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[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*This could be very helpful for our framing for Mascaro!*

*Should we set a place and time for Monday the 21st? I know you have something at 3pm. What about noon or 12:30 on that day? [omitted logistics of finding a place to meet – we settled on Everyday Café in Homewood, pending the outcome of the snowstorm (which was fine)].*

Wednesday 16 January 2019 Michael email to Michelle King

*Wanted to share this invitation with you and ask you also to share it with Adam Lobel. I was planning to come to your session on Feb 2, but unfortunately there is a global switchboard board retreat on the same day. Ruth Mostern and I are leading this project and we want to build in a meditation component from the start. I hope you and Adam can join us on Jan. 31 [lunch invitation email follows]*

[Later that day, Michelle email to Michael]

*Thank you for sharing this incredible opportunity! On the one hand, I wish you were able to attend the February 2nd talk, because we are also talking about loss and the environment. On the other hand, it's crucial that these conversations are happening in many spaces, across disciplines, and ways of living. I love the questions and themes your group are wrestling with from loss to speculative fiction to power. Looking forward to being in community holding these questions. I passed along the opportunity to Adam as well.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Michelle]

*great! This will, if all goes as we hope, a two-three year project, and as I said, we're keen to build in a meditative practice to the whole project (very un-academic ;) And yes, I agree, these are such important conversations!*

*looking forward to seeing you soon!*

Sunday 20 January 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*I've spent much of the afternoon banging my head against the proverbial wall on this grant; I've put some stuff into the document and raised some questions. It's not looking like a ton of progress at this point, but my brain is now working on it. I'm partly stuck on how we create stuff for engineers that we actually want to and can do -- meaning, how do we make the stuff we put in both stay true to our project and seem interesting and relevant for the engineers. The solution I'm gravitating toward is related to the idea of "holistic engineering" and how we might imagine developing courses or course materials or modules that would be useful for the sustainability certificate and the summer program David mentioned to you. I'm a bit hesitant to write anything, however, as I'm pretty ignorant about the state of engineering. So I have some notes and thoughts, but it's going to need work. And I wonder if you think it is enough, versus some more ambitious stuff we might do or try that would actually involve engineers in, well, engineering something.*

*I definitely think we should push forward with this and see what we can do, but I also think the Chancellor's seed grants will be easier for us, as we can present the project more or less as it actually is, instead of trying to add this component. My biggest fear (and why I haven't written more) is that we'll end up writing stuff in that we don't actually care about or want, just to get the money, and then we'll have to do that stuff.*



*so far, 11 people have RSVP'd for the lunch. I will send a reminder tomorrow morning; we have to get a count to the caterer by Wednesday. We've managed an all-vegan lunch.*

Monday 21 January 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Everyday Café at noon: I'll be there.*

*I'm going to look at the grant application between now and then; but between the fact that the grant is due on Friday, and the fact that this application will ask us to shoehorn ourselves into sustainability as a concept (as explicated by engineers), I can see the point that it might not be the best fit. Their funder is a construction company with a LEED component – pretty far afield from what we're trying to communicate. <https://www.mascaroconstruction.com/services/sustainability/>.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Great -- I figure, if we can throw something together, great, but maybe we aim for the Chancellor's seed grant, LOI due Feb 8 and application a month later. There we're unconstrained, and have more time. But no reason not to at least toss something to Mascaro -- if they say no, they say no.*

*see you soon,*

*any artifact from this meeting?*

Thursday 24 January 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*I've finished a draft of the MSCI seed grant draft that is coherent, fits in five pages, and includes citations. I'm not satisfied that it's quite concrete enough, nor does it name any names other than ours though it includes plenty of assurances that we know people. I'm struggling to get further with the 5-page limit. It's not bad – I wouldn't be embarrassed for it to go in as-is, even – but I do think that it could use more work. I'll come back to it again in a few hours with fresh eyes and perhaps with you having looked at it as well.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Yes, I'll try to have another go at it right now...*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*took another pass at the two docs, and made some minor adjustments (and filled in my bio/experience). I'm pushing the piano for today (the phrase my track coach used to use for when you come of the last turn in the 400m and can't sprint any more but have to keep running flat out -- it's like pushing a piano) so I'm going to hang it up. I can take another pass tomorrow morning or afternoon, whichever works best with your schedule.*

*yes, I agree, it doesn't sing, but it's not at all bad. I think that the limited space and disparate nature of the component pieces makes it tough. Thanks!!*

Friday 25 January 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*I think it's ready to go - good enough. Let's send it. I have meetings off and on (but mostly on) until late afternoon. I'll download the application and budget from Google Docs and format it in Word, and I'll make sure that I have a 2-page CV that's up to date. If you get this in the next 20 minutes or so and want to send me your CV, I'll submit it. If I don't hear from you, can I send you everything at that point?*

*We did okay! Fingers crossed*

[Later that day, Michael Email to Ruth – something seems missing in between...]\

*We are already forging important partnerships in the community to broaden and deepen our expertise. The Carnegie Museum of Natural History has extensive experience in documenting natural and social change and has recently hired a curator for the Anthropocene, whose input on this project will be invaluable as we seek to narrate and document climate-related transformations. The Phipps Conservatory is a local and national leader in sustainability initiatives and has extensive experience with public outreach and curricular development. (Both will be present at our planning event in late January.) We will seek to extend these alliances to the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium and the National Aviary, both local conservation leaders deeply concerned and engaged in education and in research on the effects of a changing climate. Combined with our extensive academic networks at Pitt and CMU, these partnerships will greatly enrich and enhance all aspects of the work we've proposed here.*

*or something*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael}

*Maybe also add something about our ties to engineering and science? I can lay claim to four credible connections: 1) David Sanchez is on the advisory committee for my NEH Water in Central Asia grant, and the "water future" course in that sequence will be an engineering elective; 2) I'm an MSCI Fellow this year, 3) I'm a Water Collaboratory affiliate, and 4) I'm a Climate and Global Change Center affiliate. So, I think that adds up to being able to add a sentence or two about how we have already begun to forge ties with sustainability efforts in science and engineering, which we will be able to build upon during our seed funding year. That demonstrates that we are truly committed to the level of radical interdisciplinarity that we are promising, as well as to the specific ability to accomplish the aims of this program.*

*Thanks for working on this! I have another meeting in 20 minutes, but I'll keep checking in as I have moments of free time...*

[The proposal went in on Friday 25 January. The text follows:]

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## Agile Design for the Anthropocene: Cover Sheet

### Co-PIs:

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### Research Challenges

What are appropriate design principles for a rapidly changing climate, one that is unpredictable and, in some respects, even unknowable? How can we engineer objects and systems to be cheap, modular, flexible, and portable for a world that we cannot fully understand or anticipate? What expertise must we bring to bear to answer these questions?

### Abstract

Sustainability is about maintaining dynamic and complex technological and institutional systems that do not compromise the needs of future generations (WCED 1987). Resilience is the capacity of such systems to resist damage and recover quickly in case of disturbance. The Anthropocene, our era of rapid, cataclysmic and unpredictable climate transformation, requires frameworks and solutions that go beyond these paradigms.

An incongruity exists between the conceptual frameworks of sustainability and resilience and the nature and magnitude of the disruptions stemming from climate transformation. Some existing ecosystems (ice sheets, coral reefs) are no longer sustainable or resilient, and human systems that depend upon their ecosystem services may not be either. While engineering for sustainability and resilience remains urgently necessary, it is also necessary to identify design principles for what lies beyond or outside the sustainability framework.

However, the latest IPCC report (2018) clarifies that the scope of inevitable change is almost unimaginable. If climate transformation is a *hyperobject*, a problem too big and too frightening to contemplate (Morton 2013), how can we comprehend and develop appropriate design processes? This requires an interdisciplinary methodology for Agile Design for the Anthropocene that takes ongoing transformation and irresolvable uncertainty about that transformation as foundational.

## **Agile Design for the Anthropocene: Proposal**

### **Goals and Rationale**

MSCI Seed Grant Funding will permit us to convene a radically interdisciplinary group of social scientists, humanists, environmental scientists, artists, curators, and engineers to explore the challenge of Agile Design for the Anthropocene. We take the term Agile Design from the domain of software development, where it refers to an approach under which requirements and solutions emerge through the collaborative efforts of self-organizing teams responsive to user feedback. Agile Design is a set of principles for adaptation, empirical knowledge, and continuous improvement. “Agile is the ability to create and respond to change. It is a way of dealing with, and ultimately succeeding in, an uncertain and turbulent environment.” (Agile Alliance, 2019).

As such, Agile is an excellent methodology for design and documentation that is responsive to our contemporary and future era of transformation and uncertainty. The interdisciplinary team that we convene will: 1) draft a document about how to apply Agile principles to design for the Anthropocene, 2) draft curriculum modules that prepare engineers and other designers to incorporate Agile Design for the Anthropocene principles into sustainability education, 3) draft a statement of research ethics for design in the Anthropocene, modeled on the Declaration of Helsinki for medical ethics (World Medical Association 2013), and 4) prepare to seek funding that will allow us to fully complete this endeavor.

The design challenges we have in mind are ones that will require both Agile design principles and radically interdisciplinary perspectives: the research challenge that we are addressing is about how to take unpredictable, fundamental, and cataclysmic disruption as a design starting point. The design principles that we propose to develop are intended to make it easier for engineers and others to iteratively ask and answer questions like: How can we improve evacuation from flood and fire catastrophes? How can we resettle climate refugees in new temporary or permanent homes that offer stability and dignity? What kinds of sensor systems, data management systems, and socio-cultural systems (e.g. artworks, museums, storytelling) best document slow catastrophes such as desertification, melting glaciers, and sea level rise? How do we feed the planet after the incipient collapse of ocean fisheries? What is the appropriate ethical perspective to adopt toward a certain but indefinite “broken world” (Mulgan 2011) and how does it guide our thinking about design? Questions like these begin beyond sustainability and resilience frameworks, though those frameworks certainly inform our thinking about them.

In addition to developing a draft guide to methods and a draft curriculum, we envision drafting a “A Declaration of Helsinki” for academics working in the field of Sustainability. Such calls have been made (for example, for engineers working on climate change; Lawler and Morley, 2017). However, no declaration yet exists, and even the call is not nearly broad enough in scope to address the problems we have in mind. Again, this work can only be realized by the kind of interdisciplinary team we will convene.

Finally, developing this methodology and curriculum will also advance our efforts to prepare an application for an [NEH Publication Grant](#) to produce a book that communicates the

broader lessons of our investigations on this and related topics. The anticipated book and accompanying website will introduce our methodology for agile design to a wide audience of engineers, policy makers, NGOs, investors, and artists who are prepared to act on our recommendations.

Developing documentation and curriculum for Agile design on a planetary scale is a task that can only be accomplished by a radically interdisciplinary team. Engineers and computer scientists know how to model and build things; humanists and social scientists know how to identify, formulate, and approach vast and abstract questions; artists know how to make these problems and their stakes legible to the public; and policy-makers know how to translate big ideas into implementable solutions. We thus need to work at the nexus of convergent interdisciplinary research networks to realize our aims in this project, and one of our tasks is simply to assemble that team, translate among their diverse perspectives, and foster a climate of understanding and communication.

Interdisciplinarity is key to this enterprise. MCSI Seed Grant Funding will allow us to convene a working group that encompasses the entire University, including GSPIA, the School of Engineering, the Graduate School of Public Health, the School of Computing and Information, and departments throughout the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. We have also begun forging important partnerships with local institutions, such as the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH), which has extensive experience in documenting natural and social change and has recently hired a curator for the Anthropocene, and the Phipps Conservatory, a local and national leader in sustainability initiatives. We have convened a planning meeting with partners from Pitt, CMU, the Phipps, CMNH, the Shambala Meditation Center, and others in late January. We will seek to extend these alliances to the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium and the National Aviary, both local conservation leaders deeply concerned and engaged in education and in research on the effects of a changing climate. These networks demonstrate that we are truly committed to the level of radical interdisciplinarity that we are promising, as well as to the specific ability to accomplish the aims of this program.

In keeping with the literature on best practices for interdisciplinary teams (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2018), much of the proposed activity includes community-building within the larger project team and the development of focused working groups. The “un-conferences,” which serve as bookends for the project (in early fall 2019 and summer 2020), provide a retreat-like atmosphere that will enable participants time simply to talk to each other, because our frameworks are so different, we know such different things, and we approach problems in different ways. We may use the same language to mean very different things. Many of us will never have been in the same room with many others of us. We need spaces and opportunities that allow us to step back and reflect, and doing so is facilitated when we get outside of our usual places and routines.

For these reasons, coordination will also be vitally important. We request funds to hire a graduate student to act as research coordinator on the project for the year. This person will assist

the PIs in the preparation of the further grant applications, curricula, and reports that we are proposing to complete and will serve as liaison among the participants and working groups.

### **An Innovative Connection to Sustainability**

We firmly endorse sustainability as a model. We hope that many aspects of human life and the engineered environment persist without interruption, insofar as possible. However, sustainability alone is inadequate for managing change in the Anthropocene, for at least two reasons. One is that there are some things that we know must change, such as the carbon economy that has set catastrophic climate transformation into motion while polluting our air, land, and water. Another is that there are already things that we know we cannot sustain, and there are more to come. It would require four times the earth's resources for the whole world's population to live like the people of the United States (De Chant, 2012). Meanwhile, rising sea levels make sustaining certain coastal settlements and ways of life impossible, and warming and acidifying seas make fisheries (along with communities and food systems predicated upon them) unsustainable.

Our interest in the iterative methodology of Agile design is animated by these concerns and larger philosophical questions related to them. What does sustainability seek to sustain, and for whom? Who decides? How do we know when to give up on resilience and countenance relocation or dispersion? How do we cope with the effects of such unpredictable but inevitable disruptions? Engineers, artists, and philosophers all have expertise essential to answering these questions. Our goal is not to supplant sustainability and resilience either as design strategies or as a conceptual framework. Rather, we seek to extend them to encompass these and related issues, which we believe must be addressed intentionally and immediately.

Our project aligns with the Sustainability Plan for Pitt in numerous ways. First, the Plan calls for exploration through “the integration of a creative, multidisciplinary curriculum, groundbreaking research, and social engagement.” Both the proposed methodology and curriculum for agile design fulfill this goal. This project also makes a unique contribution to the Plan's call for “holistic” learning through its radically interdisciplinary nature, including the arts and humanities. With respect to research, our project seeks to “advance the frontier of knowledge and make a positive impact on the world through collaborative and multidisciplinary approaches to sustainability-related research” by focusing “on areas of great social and environmental need.” As the foregoing narrative makes clear, we will achieve these aims “through a robust capacity to partner.” Our project also advances the Plan's goals in relation to Community and Culture, helping to create “a culture of shared responsibility for our impact on surrounding communities, the region, and the world.” This work seeks to advance a holistic and integrative notion of “physical and mental health” and contributes to the “quality of life of our campus community” and to that of the wider systems of our city and region.

This is innovative work. Our goal is to integrate traditional scholarly research from throughout Arts and Sciences disciplines, Engineering perspectives on sustainable design, and artistic and activist practices. Moreover, we are asking participants to literally redefine what we mean by the concept of sustainability and to identify the circumstances within which current

ideas about sustainability are inadequate. These aspirations are feasible only because the PIs have such a robust track record of successful interdisciplinary work. Moreover, there are no analogues to the four documents that we are proposing to produce during the Seed Grant year.

### **Work plan**

The two PIs for this project are well positioned to lead this work. Separately and together, they have already completed substantial work in this area. Michael Goodhart (Political Science, Philosophy, Gender Studies) is Director of the Global Studies Center and has written on political responsibility for climate change and on environmental human rights. His previous work on injustice addresses similarly intractable structural issues, and his work on participatory democracy feeds directly into the Agile Design framework as applied to social issues. He also has extensive experience coordinating interdisciplinary projects and teams, including as Chair of the American Political Science Association Presidential Task Force on Democracy, Economic Security, and Social Justice in a Volatile World. Ruth Mostern (History) is the Director of the World History Center and a specialist in environmental history. She is a 2019 Mascaro Faculty Lecturer, and an affiliate of the Pitt Water Collaboratory and the Pitt Climate and Global Change Center. She is co-PI of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to develop interdisciplinary curriculum on the history of water in Central Asia, and she is currently teaching a graduate seminar in Cultural Studies entitled “The Sense of Place in an Epoch of Loss,” which explores many of the themes we are discussing here. Both Goodhart and Mostern were invited to participate in a CMU-led Mellon Sawyer Seminar entitled “Bread and Water: Access, Belonging, and Environmental Justice in the City.”

In 2018, Goodhart and Mostern developed and submitted a proposal for a Mellon Sawyer Seminar, which ranked second in the internal competition for funding. While space in this proposal does not permit us to list names, we can confirm that received affirmations from approximately two dozen colleagues and collaborators attesting to their interest to working with us in this area. With funding from the Global Studies Center and the World History Center, we are convening many of those individuals in late January for a working lunch and planning meeting (see above). For these reasons, we anticipate that we can begin conduct MSCI Seed Grant work promptly, should we receive funding to do so. Our plan is to:

- Hire one Graduate Student Fellow who will work with the PIs to develop a bibliography, convene meetings, manage communication, build a simple website, keep notes, and help author the documents we have specified.
- Host a series of meetings: 1) A kickoff planning retreat (“un-conference”) at Pymatuning around Labor Day 2019; 2) Monthly lunches for interdisciplinary working groups that will tackle particular topics that have been identified at the first retreat; 3) A winter mid-year lunch where working groups will check in and share progress.
- At a summer 2020 return to Pymatuning, we will integrate a final working meeting with summer field classes held there. We will pilot a lesson from our draft curriculum, document student outcomes, and hold a focus group with students.

- Host four visitors from outside Pittsburgh to consult with us about the content of our work and the form of our documents (e.g. curriculum, declaration, agile design methods).
- By the end of the Seed Grant term, we will deliver four draft documents: 1) a handbook about how to apply Agile principles to design for the Anthropocene, 2) draft curriculum modules that prepare engineers and other designers to incorporate Agile Design for the Anthropocene principles into sustainability education, 3) a “Declaration of Helsinki” for design in the Anthropocene, and 4) an application for NEH funding.

### **Milestones**

- Summer 2019: hire a GSA, develop a bibliography and website, identify collaborators, plan and host a Labor Day meeting at Pymatuning
- Fall 2019: establish a schedule and work plan for groups to draft the four documents listed in the work plan and to complete a set of core concepts: a common base vocabulary for or interdisciplinary group
- January 2020: by our mid-year luncheon, the working groups will have outlined their documents and have plans for completion
- May 2020: the working groups will have completed drafts of the specified documents
- June 2020: after the second Pymatuning trip, we will have refined the draft material and tested the curriculum
- July 2020: at the end of the grant, we will have completed the four documents specified in the work plan and we will be prepared to apply for significant external funding.

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### MSCI Seed Grant: Agile Design for the Anthropocene

#### Budget

1 full-time GSR (at the DSA&S TF rate: \$9,830/term = 1.5% fringe)		\$29,490
Catered winter lunch at Phipps with community partners		1,000
Fall 2019 “un-conference” at Pymatuning Laboratory of Ecology		
Transportation (2) 12-person vans @\$85/day x 2 days	\$340	
\$.22/mile@200 miles r/t x 2 vans	88	
Conference room rental \$35/day x 2 days	70	
Accommodation \$35/person/night x 24 people	840	
Catering (lunch, dinner, breakfast, lunch) x 24 people\$	3,000	
Conference total		4,338
Spring 2020 “un-conference 2” at Pymatuning (same budget)		4,388
2 Outside speakers/advisors (\$1500 visit for room/dinner/hotel x 2)		3,000
[2 outside speakers/advisors \$1500 visit for room/dinner/hotel x 2) <u>Match from GSC and WHC]</u>		[3,000]
Monthly working group lunch meetings w/community partners (\$300 X10)		3,000

Travel funds for PIs to attend related professional workshops and training	4,000
[Administrative support from GSC and WHC: <u>in kind match</u> ]	[\$5,000]
MSCI Budget:	<hr/> \$49,166
[WHC and GSC Match]:	[\$8,000]

### **Budget Justification**

The budget items are self-explanatory. The full-time GSR will assist the PIs in preparation of external grant applications (e.g., NEH Publication grant) and with coordination of the activities of the working groups. We have budgeted this at the DSA&S TF rate on the assumption that the student hired might come from the Dietrich School. (Past experience shows that paying the lower GSA rate makes it difficult to recruit good students, who can earn more as TFs.) We are happy to work with the MCSI on alternatives.

The winter catered lunch and working group lunches are included to ensure regular opportunities for the project team, which includes numerous community partners, to meet in person to coordinate work and develop grant proposals.

The fall 2019 “un-conference” is an overnight retreat at Pitt’s Pymatuning Laboratory of Ecology. The “un-conference” model takes us outside, into nature, where we can reflect upon the very objects of our inquiry in a reflective and relaxed way. This gathering will be the crucial brainstorming and planning session for the NEH publication grant (drafts due October 2019, proposals dues December 2019).

The spring/summer conference is a return to Pymatuning to prepare final reports and documents and to plan for next steps. We anticipate coordinating it with an MCSE Summer Field Course in order to pilot and assess the curriculum module that we have developed and to maximize collaboration with other MSCE-affiliated faculty.

We have included funds to bring external speakers/advisors to campus for 2-3 day visits to present research, consult with us on the grant application, etc. We have included funds for two speakers in the MSCE budget. The Global Studies Center and World History Center will match these funds to allow four speakers.

The travel funds will allow the PIs to attend additional professional workshops or undertake additional travel relevant to our pursuance of the NEH grant.

Global Studies Center and World History Center staff will provide the administrative support for these activities: an in-kind match of staff resources that we estimate at a value of \$5,000.

[PI cvs are omitted]

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Wednesday 29 January 2019 Ruth email to Michael (in light of [record cold temperatures](#) well below zero):

*I assume that we want to hold to our schedule given the likelihood of a slightly warmer day and the difficulty of rescheduling? What do you think?*

[Later that day Michael email to Ruth]

*yes, I'm not sure we can postpone anyway, as the dates are off. We'll just hope for the best...*

*should we coordinate a little (by email is fine) about the proceedings tomorrow?*

[Later that day Ruth email to Michael]

*Yes, good idea.*

*One thing is that I myself am not sure about is how to get to the lunch venue. Is it the room at the back of the Cuba exhibit? Do our guests come in the front entrance, and if so, do they need to pay admission, or are their names on a list?*

*As to the event itself....I think we want to introduce the Epoch of Loss concept and the planning and activities we've done thus far (Sawyer application, my CLST seminar, Mascaro application), talk about our hopes to target an NEH grant by the fall and to organize an informal campus(es)-community constituency around this concept, ask everyone to introduce themselves, brainstorm.*

*And if anyone thinks they won't make it tomorrow for weather reasons (either directly or because they will have a childcare gap with schools closed), we should ask them to let us know.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*OK -- my email that just went out should take care of most of that. As for the event: Yes. We probably also want to stress that there's this particular project (the NEH-oriented one) and the idea that by continuing these conversations, other things might emerge/evolve. If we keep our overview fairly brief, we can then ask everyone to introduce themselves and say a bit about what intrigued them enough to come. That can help get the conversation rolling!*

*So I think we're on the same page...*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*All good! Heading out into the cold in a few minutes,*

Thursday 7 February 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*[Subject line "here's a draft"]: attached.*

*here's the link that explains what they are looking for: <https://www.chancellor.pitt.edu/pitt-seed-project>*

*I think what's here could go in, but if you want to tweak it and play around, go for it! You'll recognize much of this language...*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Thanks. Today is slipping through my fingers, but I'll get to it first thing tomorrow morning.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Just note -- it's due at NOON on Friday, so if you want to tinker a bit and then just submit, that's perfect. You can get to the submission page via the link in my original message in this thread.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Ah, thanks for letting me know. I'll get to it first thing and then submit.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Great, thank you! As I said, it's passable now (just a placeholder) so the key is to get it in. But it has plenty of room for improvement...*

Friday 8 February 2019, Ruth email to Michael

*Here's a lightly edited next draft. Since this is not being adjudicated, I'm sure it doesn't need a ton more attention at this stage. I'll submit it around 11 before I leave the house, if I don't hear otherwise from you.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*A couple of interesting links:*

*This came to me from one of the students in my grad seminar: [https://www.instagram.com/p/BteRfQDFK0/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/BteRfQDFK0/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)*

*This is Wednesday's Environmental Humanities colloquium (one of my favorite topics within the domain we're exploring): <https://www.humcenter.pitt.edu/event/environmental-humanities-colloquium-ecology-between-scales>*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Draft looks great, let's submit!*

*Thanks for the links, planning to be there on Wednesday (I'll probably be late, but that's OK given the format...)*

*Have you seen this? <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans-annotated.html?gtm=bottom&gtm=bottom>*

*there's a book version coming out in a few weeks, but I love the online annotated version I've linked to here.*

*OK< back to the salt mines -- happy weekend!*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*I hadn't seen this article – this is great. David Wallace-Wells has been writing up a storm on this topic. All his stuff is fantastic. We should invite him...*

*I like the phrase about “contemplating the scarier half of the distribution curve of possibilities.”*

*I sent in the letter of intent – you should have received a notification.*

*More and more looking forward to working on all of this,*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Got the notification -- we've lived to write another day. Thanks!*

[LOI for the seed grant follows]

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### **Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss**

Co-PIs: Michael Goodhart, Professor of Political Science; Director, Global Studies Center

Ruth Mostern, Associate Professor of History; Director, World History Center

**Overview:** Present discussions about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system—transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems—focus largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. After all, the continued existence of human life on earth may in fact depend upon efforts to geoengineer the atmosphere or the reefs, and it is understandable that we wish to protect the remaining members of beloved nonhuman species. Yet scientifically-oriented discussions about the urgency of averting or mitigating climate transformation have proven politically ineffective, with environmental concerns remaining secondary or tertiary despite the heroic efforts of committed activists.

Meanwhile, irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing

from the map; millennia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth; the streets of Miami already flood on sunny days at high tide as a result of rising sea levels. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need *new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration* that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch.

To an extent that is rare in academia, the issues are largely uncharted. The questions are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? How can excellent and constructive science and policy-making coexist with the acceptance that there will be profound loss? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy when there is so much to be done? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? How might reflection on loss prove politically productive where consideration of science has fallen short? Does speculative fiction help us envision what may be coming? How can we take stock of what exactly it is that we are losing?

We are assembling an interdisciplinary group of scholars, activists, artists, curators, policy-makers and writers from on and beyond our campus to explore these issues. We want to explore the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global loss..

**Outcomes:** We hope to develop cutting-edge research into these questions through collaborative work with our interdisciplinary team. Specifically, we hope to:

- Develop languages and frameworks for communicating about the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss and to explore their political potentiality;
- Develop curriculum that combines scholarly knowledge with experiential learning and mindfulness practices that help students prepare for a world in which constant adaptation and climatic uncertainty will be “normal”;
- Work with colleagues in Engineering and Design to develop processes of agile design suited for an era characterized by predictable uncertainty and instability;
- Produce publicly accessible media – books, websites, podcasts, community programs – that will shift the conversation beyond mitigation, adaptation, and resilience – all vitally important – to encompass loss, reflection, commemoration, documentation, etc.

**Resources required:** Interdisciplinarity is key to this enterprise. Seed Grant Funding will allow us to convene a working group that encompasses the entire University. We have also begun forging important partnerships with local institutions, such as the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH), which has extensive experience in documenting natural and social change and has recently hired a curator for the Anthropocene, and the Phipps Conservatory, a local and national leader in sustainability initiatives. (We convened a planning meeting with partners from Pitt, CMU, the Phipps, CMNH, the Shambala Meditation Center, and others in late January.)

In keeping with the literature on best practices for interdisciplinary teams (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2018), much of the proposed activity includes

**community-building** within the larger project team and the development of focused working groups. We will hold several “un-conferences” that will provide a retreat-like atmosphere that will enable participants time simply to talk to each other, because our frameworks are so different, we know such different things, and we approach problems in different ways. We may use the same language to mean very different things. Many of us will never have been in the same room with many others of us. We need spaces and opportunities for reflection; such spaces can be created when we stop outside of our usual places and routines. Coordination will also be vitally important. We will hire a graduate student to act as **research coordinator** on the project for the year, including the efforts of several working groups.

**Plan for sustainability:** This funding will be used to support activities leading to the submission of a major NEH Publication grant in December 2019 and to seek additional/alternative funding in Spring 2020. The aim is to secure funding to enable a 3-5 year project timeline.

**Plan for Pitt alignment:** *Advance Educational Excellence* (Enhance the curriculum, enrich the student experience); *Research of Impact* (Identify and engage in strategic research opportunities, extend the impact of our research); *Strengthen Communities*: (Foster a culture of civic engagement); *Diversity and Inclusion*: (Enrich the student experience); *Embrace the World* (Connect domestic and international, cultivate globally capable and engaged students, convene a global community of researchers).

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Wednesday 13 February 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*A sustainability management and policy prof talking about why the assumptions of his field don't make sense any more...*

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=7d8845f0f5&attid=0.1&permmmsgid=msg-f:1625387003567363765&th=168e88de3a2b56b5&view=att&disp=inline>

Thursday 14 February 2019 Michael email to Ruth  
*yeah...well, maybe for the next one (which is due March 8).*

Friday 15 February 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Shall we plan to meet sometime to plan for next steps with the next application, and also to discuss possible follow up from our lunch at Phipps? Next week I'm free Monday morning at late afternoon and Tuesday before 10. After that I'm hosting a visitor and I'm busy, but I have good availability the following week*

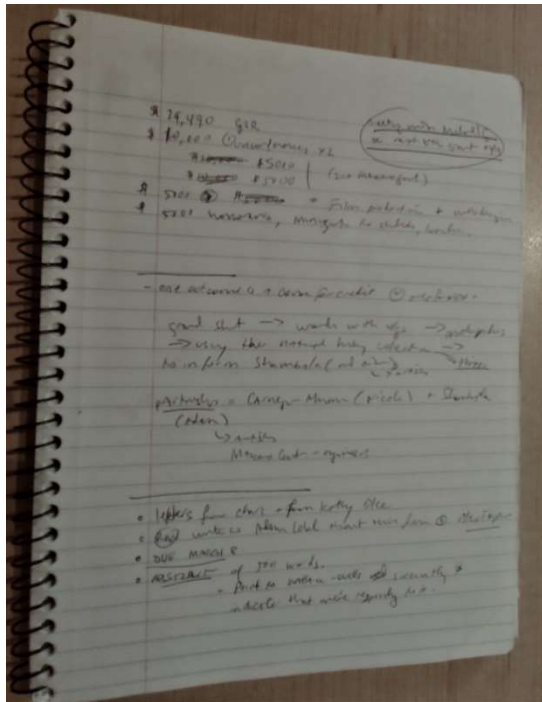
[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*I am free Monday and Tuesday mornings until 11:30 am. We could meet at Phipps at 9:30 on Monday. Or early Tuesday on campus: either is ok for me. I am then out of town for the week, but I'll have time to work while I'm away, so better to meet sooner in my view.*

[a long exchange follows in which we confirm that we are serious about “early” and decide to meet at the Café Carnegie at 8:30 am on Tuesday 19 February 2019.]

Monday 25 February 2019 Ruth email to Michael:

[subject line “notes from our meeting last week”] Capturing these from my handwritten notebook and embellishing on them -



-- The budget is something like:

\$29,490 for a GSR

\$10,000 for two conferences as described in the Mascaro proposal

\$7,000 for film production and web design assistance

\$1,000 for honoraria for visitors (3 x \$300)

\$1,000 for minigrants to student authors (say 10 x \$100)

\$1,000 for project team lunches during the grant year (say 3 x \$300)

+in kind admin support from our Centers

(We didn't really flesh out the final three items when we met, so I've just penciled in some numbers that seem about right)

--Outcomes include: designing a course for credit around short videos on Epoch of Loss (EOL) in

conjunction with Carnegie Museum etc. as well as preparing for an NEH and IMLS grant, and completing 10 (lets say) pilot short videos

--The rough outline of the plan is: we hire a grad student who à works with undergraduates who à research EOL themes and spend time in the Natural History Museum collection (and maybe elsewhere – Phipps, Carrie Furnace) in order to à make videos with curated items from the museum (etc) as inspiration and backdrop à for an audience of artists, activists, engineers, Shambala, etc.

--Our partners are Carnegie Museum (Nicole), Shambala (Adam), potentially many of the other people we've been cultivating

--We need to: get letters of support from our chairs and from Kathy Blee (MG agreed to contact her office), contact partners (RM agreed to contact Adam Lobel and Alex Taylor [museum studies program]), write a 500 word abstract (asap so that we can send it to the other people we need to contact – I don't know if we agreed which of us originates it)



*--Due March 8. It's short, but the criteria are very specific and clearly specified, so we have to write with precision. In the Plan for Pitt, we've clearly got Prepares Students, Advances Knowledge, Strengthens Communities; for this one we're not so much doing Embodies Diversity or Engages with the World. I wonder if we can say something about plans for doing outreach to international students and URM students? And/or preparing students to make some of these videos while doing study abroad? Among the priority areas listed on the RFP site we: Personalize educational experience, Extend the impact of our research through application to practice, Foster a culture of civic engagement.*

*Priority next step is that abstract. My schedule frees up somewhat this week starting Thursday afternoon.*

*Thoughts?*

Tuesday 26 February 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*this pretty much matches my own notes (and thanks for the embellishments). Why don't you submit this one, just in case they do some simplistic comparing of lists or something.*

*I've written to Kathy's assistant for details on that process; I will also write to Nicole Heller at CMNH once we have an abstract. I will try to take a shot at that either this afternoon or tomorrow morning, to get something down for you to work with (or start over from) later in the week*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Sounds good! I'll be able to turn to this mid-afternoon Thursday.*

Wednesday 27 February 2019 Michael invitation to a google doc to Ruth

*OK, this is what I managed to get together.. It doesn't sing, but it's a start. I have time tomorrow morning but feel stuck and like I should hand off to you. Thursday afternoon and Friday are disastrous for me. But tomorrow I will get together a draft letter for Kathy in the morning, and we can send her whatever we come up with by the end of Friday. I should also run it by Nicole and you by Adam, just to make sure they are on board.*

Thursday 28 February 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Thanks for taking the first step with this. I'll be able to work on it a bunch today. I just had a fantastic meeting with Alex Taylor from HAA, who is the director of the museum studies program – which includes an initiative where undergrad students do internships under the direction of a GSA. He is very enthusiastic about what we're doing, there are already museum studies interns working in the natural history museum doing things kind of like this, and he's happy to be named in our proposal. Here are a few notes from my convo with him:*

--We should mention the Anthropocene Living Room at the museum, which would potentially be a great place for student videos to be shown: <https://carnegiemnh.org/tag/anthropocene-living-room/>; he thinks the museum would also love to have these videos for their social media.

--Access to museum collections and use of museum objects can be difficult and fraught at Carnegie Museum. They are poorly catalogued, siloed, and curators have a lot of gatekeeping control over the separate collection. This is not a reason not to proceed with the plan as we've sketched it out. This isn't a reason not to mention it, but we should finesse it a bit "working with Nicole Heller to identify opportunities for students to work with collections..." something like that.

--Museum Director Eric Dorfman is teaching a special topics course in the fall for Museum Studies, so that is another opportunity to collaborate and a cohort of students.

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

sounds all good -- exciting!

*I will work on the draft letter for Kathy. I'll need to send it to her before I leave for an off-campus meeting at 2pm tomorrow, so we'll need some kind of decent-enough draft by then.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*I'm on it! I have one more meeting, then I'm heading home, and I'll make this my priority.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*great! My day is collapsing, ugh, so I'll be working on the letter...sometime...*

[A whole bunch of emails omitted organizing letters from our Dean and departments chairs in support of the Seed Grant application. Serious pain in the backside.]

Friday 8 March 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Very relevant to the work we are proposing – lots of this coming out right now with the Wallace-Wells book just published –*

<https://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/the-other-kind-of-climate-denialism>

[Later that day, an email from the Mascaro Center to Ruth and Michael]

*The Mascaro Center's advisory committee has reviewed the proposals submitted for the 2019-2020 seed grant competition. We regret to inform you that your proposal titled "Agile Design for the Anthropocene" was not selected for funding this round. Below for your reference is a summary of the committee's feedback.*

*Committee feedback:*

*The committee felt this was an interesting proposal, in that the area of focus is indeed interesting to advance sustainability generally, but that the funding request was too steep for the proposed deliverables. Although the PI's propose to bring people together from multiple schools across the campus to a meeting in Pymatuning, it was felt that they had greatly underestimated the difficulty in doing this. After working to forge multi-disciplinary teams at Pitt for over 15 years, MCSI has found this to be far, far more difficult than one might expect. It is not at all clear that the PI's will be able to achieve broad participation in their program – seeing some letters of support from faculty/schools would have been very useful. It was also unclear what the GSA would be doing.*

*Thank you for your interest in MCSI, we hope to have the opportunity to work with you in the future.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Ah well! That definitely seemed like a stretch, even as we were submitting it. I have good feelings about today's, though*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*Yeah, I feel like they said basically "we couldn't do it, so you won't be able to," ignoring the interest we already have demonstrated with our meeting, etc.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Exactly... They could alternatively have said "these applicants seem like they're really good at building interdisciplinary communities. Maybe we could learn something from them." But I'm not surprised that it didn't go that way...*

[That same day – timing hard to gauge, as it's a different thread; Ruth email to WHC administrative person]

*I'm getting ready to submit the Chancellor's Seed Grant application – DUE NOON TODAY, and I have just discovered that the application requires a budget on a special excel template in addition to a budget narrative. I would be very grateful if you could help me with this. I think it will be simple, but it requires a couple of numbers that I don't have right to hand, and some reshuffling of the numbers into different categories than I have them in, which I would be grateful for your help with. I'm attaching both template and the proposal that includes the budget narrative.*

*We're asking for a total of \$49,290. That includes a GSA (\$29,490 for a GSR at the DSA&S TA/TF rate which they want broken down into salary and fringe); \$10,000 for two unconferences @\$5,000 each – per the budget for the Mascaro Center grant, also attached; and \$10,000 of other odds and ends of food, travel, and salaries.*

*Thanks for working with me on this at the last minute – this requirement catches me by surprise. I'm at my desk from now till noon and happy to talk by skype or phone if any of this is unclear – or if you don't have time to put this on the front burner, in which case I'll do it.*

*Many many thanks for handling a fiddly and last minute request*

[Huge long series of emails about how to calculate fringe, whether it had already been included etc., made complicated by Michael being on the road. Eventually resolved in time, with David's help.]

[Later that day, Michael forwarding to Ruth the confirmation of receipt of the proposal]

*Thanks! Sorry about the last-minutes hassles. Odd they didn't talk about the spreadsheet requirement.*

[Later that day, Ruth email to Michael]

*Yeah, I was taken aback by the spreadsheet requirement. Fortunately there was time to spare; and though I could have done it myself, I'm grateful to have been able to corral David. I'm optimistic about this one!*

*Have a great break,*

[The Seed Grant application follows]

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### **The Anthropocene: An Epoch of Loss**

Michael Goodhart, Department of Political Science and Global Studies Center Director

Ruth Mostern, Department of History and World History Center Director

For Submission to the Pitt Seed Project Initiative

Due March 8, 2019

#### **Concept Overview:**

The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects 2°C of earth warming by 2040 and 4°C by century's end. This "doomsday" report adds to the mounting scientific evidence that led David Wallace-Wells to argue recently in the New York Times that it's "time to panic." Scientists have long warned of the devastating effects that a 2°C increase in surface temperature would have on life and on crucial planetary ecosystems. Now, the best science tells us that catastrophic climate change is literally baked into a near future of surging seas, killer heat waves, declining food yields, unbreathable air, ocean acidification, and

accelerating mass extinction.

Numerous cognitive biases make it hard for us as humans to come to grips with this reality. “Shifting baseline syndrome” obscures the scope of past losses because each generation assesses loss in relation to prevailing conditions.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, fear is a poor motivator for action. Psychologists, scientists, and activists are discovering that some people, overwhelmed by impending catastrophe, are becoming too anxious and depressed to act and talk about climate change.<sup>2</sup>

We applaud and support all those working to understand, prevent, and adapt to catastrophic climate change; our project, however, is different. We seek to document, memorialize, and grapple with the irrevocable loss already underway, losses -- of species, communities, shared understandings and ways of life -- that will mount even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment. We aim to devise new modalities for thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic, contemplative, and activist practices in ways that are appropriate for this epoch.

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<sup>1</sup> Pauly, Daniel. "Anecdotes and the shifting baseline syndrome of fisheries." *Trends in ecology & evolution* 10.10 (1995): 430.

<sup>2</sup> Jem Bendell, “Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy,” IFLAS Occasional Paper 2 (2018).

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The questions we raise are existential and profound. They include: What are the limits of hopefulness? How can we take stock of what exactly we are losing? How can excellent science and constructive policy-making coexist with the acceptance of profound loss? Is it morally appropriate to pause for elegy amid such a crisis? Is it morally defensible not to do so? What can we learn from historical cases of civilizational collapse? How might reflection on loss prove politically productive where consideration of science has fallen short?

Transdisciplinarity is key to this enterprise. With Seed Grant funding, we will convene a series of “unconferences” and working group meetings with a team including partners from across multiple schools at Pitt, and from local institutions: including the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH), which has extensive experience in documenting natural and social change and has recently hired a curator for the Anthropocene, and the Shambhala Meditation Center, which is developing reflective approaches to confronting an epoch of loss. We held a planning meeting with these and other partners in late January. Further, we will design a curriculum that educates students about the Epoch of Loss and assists them in making videos about it.

**Plan for Pitt Alignment:**

This project will Advance Educational Excellence by enhancing the curriculum with courses that equip students to be thoughtful makers of video resources, which will themselves become part of a larger curriculum. This will enrich the student experience with opportunities for experiential learning and development of valuable skills for the knowledge economy. The project represents Research of Impact, identifying and engaging in a strategic research opportunity by taking leadership in an emergent field of study that will complement the research undertaken through the Mascaro Center for Sustainability and the Climate and Global Change Center. It will thus also extend the impact of research undertaken at the University.

The project also helps to Strengthen Communities by fostering a culture of civic engagement, especially among students, who will create public content, serve as spokespersons, and engage in outreach. These collaborations are central to the work we are doing, as both CMNH and Shambhala have expressed the need for materials to help their constituencies wrestle with loss and its implications.

Through the emphasis on global and historical experiences of catastrophic loss through war, disaster, genocide, epidemic, enslavement, etc. the project adds a new dimension to Diversity and Inclusion efforts at Pitt. Finally, the project helps Pitt to Embrace the World by addressing a

crucial global issue: one that is literally planetary in scope. In later years of the project we will convene scholars and artists from around the world in extending the scope and reach of our work.

### **Outcomes:**

We will measure success:

- By CONVENING approximately two dozen diverse participants for two unconferences and several working meetings.
- By CREATING two new courses in which students read material related to Epoch of Loss themes and create well-researched, professionally-produced videos and other resources for inclusion in the online repository for this project. This innovative curriculum will equip students to create short videos that commemorate and reflect on loss, drawing on the collections of CMNH, reflecting training through Shambhala, and in partnership with Pitt's Open Labs. These videos will form the core of a public outreach program for use by all partners. We will pilot the courses as workshops during the seed grant year and submit them as new courses for approval - in consultation with the Dietrich School Museum Studies program, the Swanson School Sustainability Certificate, and other stakeholders - by the end of the grant year.
- By DISSEMINATING ten student videos that can be used in outreach to museum-goers, members of the Shambhala community, other education, community and arts groups, and via a project website.
- By SUBMITTING two grant applications: to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a three-year, \$250,000 publication grant to create a permanent, high-quality online repository for videos, research, essays, photographs, and other resources and related print publications; and to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, for either a Community Catalyst or Museums for America grant (\$150,000-250,000) to assist the CMNH in reimagining how it engages the public through its natural history collections.

**Resources Required:**

We will hire a graduate student to act as research coordinator on the project. Duties will include mentoring students and coordinating events and group activities (\$29,490 for a GSR at the DSA&S TA/TF rate). Two “unconferences” (2 x \$5,000 = \$10,000), held ideally at Pitt’s Pymatuning Laboratory of Ecology, will bookend this phase of the project in a retreat-like atmosphere that will enable participants time to talk to each other in support of genuinely transdisciplinary thinking. As artists and engineers, curators and scientists, we know different things, we approach problems in different ways, and we use similar language to mean different things. Many of us will never have been in the same room with many others of us. We need spaces and opportunities to step back and reflect, a process facilitated by getting outside of our usual places and routines.

We will engage a professional media consultant to assist in training students to create media for this project and will also enlist professional web design assistance (\$7,000). We will also provide mini-grants for students who participate in the project (\$100 x 10 students=\$1000) and honoraria for various visitors (3 x \$300=\$900). Finally, we request support to host several team lunches with University and community partners throughout the year (3 x \$300+\$900). The Centers we direct, the World History (Mostern) and Global Studies (Goodhart) Centers, will provide in-kind administrative and staff support and cover travel for related visitors (\$5,000 total).

Total request: \$49,290.

**Plan for Sustainability:**

We aim to sustain the initiative itself. This funding will be used to support activities leading to the submission of several external grants. The aim is to secure funding to enable an addition three years of work on the project.

We are also attuned to the challenges of sustaining the videos and website that we will



produce. We will work with the University Library, Carnegie Museum, and campus IT to ensure sustainable access to the project website and videos, and we will also communicate with the Pitt-based NEH-funded Sustaining DH program (Alison Langmead, PI) to ensure that we are designing our activities in accordance with emerging and next generation best practices in this domain. We will also consult with the University Library on best practices for format, metadata, search tools and search engine optimization to ensure that the videos have visibility and longevity.

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Tuesday 26 March 2019 Michael forwards to Ruth an announcement of a grant opportunity:

*see below -- no idea what's entailed, and I'm completely booked for the next two weeks. just putting it out there...*

Thursday 28 March 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Interesting! I am slammed until the end of classes, but then I have a window of possibility until the end of the month. I can't find a full RFP on the SSRC website, so I have no idea what this entails, how much money it's for, etc. I guess the next step would be to contact [Associate Dean] for information?*

Saturday 6 April 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*ugh, I've obviously been swamped. Let's add it to next year's docket, as a back-up for the NEH. any details for your mini-conference? I'd like to try to make it to the parts that are public...*

Sunday 7 April 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*I'll send out the details for my mini-conference soon – hopefully later today. Are you free for a late lunch/early dinner at 4:30 Wednesday with our first visitor, Steff Kane?*

*In a rush and waving at you from DC, where I'm at the ACCelerate Festival with David Ruvolo and five incredibly articulate and inspiring undergraduates talking about their Digital Atlas Design Internship projects for three straight days at a kiosk in the Smithsonian. Exhausting but excellent – details on my twitter feed and on the WHC feed.*

Thursday 30 May 2019 Ruth email to Michael forwarding message from the Provost:

*Ah well!*

*forward to talking about how to move forward. I think you're in Australia when I'm back from China – when do you return to Pittsburgh?*

[Text of a notice from the Office of Research follows]

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Dear Ruth Mostern,

Thank you for applying to the 2019 Pitt Seed Project.

We received 83 project submissions this year. The pool of applicants was highly competitive and described a diverse set of transformative projects that directly align with the goals and associated strategies within the Plan for Pitt. Regrettably, your project was not selected for funding during this cycle.

We evaluated all applications based on the predefined review criteria. In addition, we made selections that supported a mix of faculty and staff representation as principal investigators, and a mix of representation across all six goals within the Plan for Pitt. These guidelines helped us ensure that the chosen applications reflected a wide range of interests and individuals within the University.

We will be announcing the 2019 Pitt Seed Project awardees next week, and we will be soliciting for new Pitt Seed Projects on an annual basis. We hope you will consider applying again in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to apply and for being patient during the time-intensive review and selection process.

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### Chapter 3: The Colorado

[Throughout fall 2018 and into spring 2019, we worked with Annabelle Clippinger of PittArts to help sponsor a screening of the film *The Colorado*. Our thinking about and planning for this event was interwoven with some of the events narrated above.]

Friday 12 October 2018 email from Annabelle Clippinger to many folks, including Michael and Ruth:

*Greetings All,*

*I have been in touch with a number of key figures from the eco-documentary about the Colorado River: *The Colorado* [www.ProjectColorado.com](http://www.ProjectColorado.com) including the film's Director, Cinematographer and Co-Writer Murat Eyuboglu, Christa Sadler, Content Manager for the film and author of the accompanying book to the film. In addition, the film was produced by National Sawdust: <https://nationalsawdust.org/> and I have been in touch with Holly Hunter there.*

*The film is:*

- A documentary film about the North American West*
- A musical tribute to land and water*
- A cautionary tale about the environment*

*The Colorado has been hailed as one of the most profound documentaries in recent memory. This beautiful film explores the complex relationship between the Colorado River and the people who make use of it. As sonically pleasing as it is visually arresting, *The Colorado* boasts a score written by some of the most acclaimed composers living today, including Pulitzer Prize laureate John Luther Adams, Glenn Kotche, William Brittelle, Shara Nova and Paola Prestini. The film is narrated by Academy Award-winning actor Mark Rylance.*

*What makes this opportunity for our Pitt community so exciting, is that this film is truly interdisciplinary, connecting environmental sciences with issues of sustainability, history, film studies, music, art, and theatre. Having these artists and thinkers in residence allows our students, faculty and staff to have access to them, and to have key conversations with them.*

*I have been working on bringing the film here for a screening on our campus, also bringing Murat Eyuboglu, Christa Sadler, and composer Paola Prestini to speak to our Pitt community about their involvement with the film, the book, and with National Sawdust. The goal is to have them in residence at Pitt for two to three days.*

*A number of university campuses have brought the entire "live version" with the film; this would mean the possibility of bringing Grammy-winning vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, cellist Jeffrey Ziegler of Kronos Quartet, and a top percussionist--all to perform live with the film. **This project would cost \$55,000** which includes their own lighting and sound technicians and a producer from National Sawdust, their flights, honoraria, per diems, and accommodations. Our Pitt students and faculty would be able to interact with them and have access to them either before or after their rehearsal, including a Q&A after the screening and performance. They*

would possibly be in University of Pittsburgh residence at Pitt for two days, one of which would be the performance. This amount also includes PITT ARTS financial contribution to the project.

Read a Review of the film in the New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/20/arts/music/review-the-colorado-a-music-driven-eco-documentary.html>

I am at this time requesting financial support to achieve “live version” with the screening and having Murat Eyuboglu, Christa Sadler, and stunning composer, Paola Prestini here as well to do outreach to our departments and community, discussing the film, music, book, and National Sawdust.

I would very much like to **have significant author Christa Sadler’s book connected with the film, *Introducing The Colorado* published by National Sawdust and This Earth Press, but costing \$60 retail, I would also appreciate a sponsor so Pitt students could receive this important book for free.**

One of the key issues is finding a location for screening and performance, if PITT ARTS IS able to raise the necessary funds from the Pitt community to create this outstanding opportunity for our campus. My goal is to make this happen in April of 2019.

Tuesday 16 October 2018 Michael email to Annabelle

thanks for your note. This is something I'm in principle interested in, though the price tag is awfully high. Maybe you are sitting on a big portion of it already?

My suggestion would be to apply to the Year of Pitt Global for matching funding. You'd have to spin it in terms of the global plan, but that could be done, focusing on the environmental angle. In that scenario, I could put up some very modest matching funds. (YoPG provides up to \$5000 in matching funds.) It's tough, as we had a grant setback, and so I am limited in my ability to fund stuff that doesn't fall into our three highlighted initiatives: Cities, Migrations, and Global Health.

Keep me posted as this progresses.

[Later that day, Annabelle email to Michael]

I have decided not to host the “live version” of the screening. Too expensive. We are instead bringing Murat Eyuboglu, Christa Sadler, and Paola Prestini for two days for the screening of *The Colorado*. The date for the screening of *The Colorado* is April 7 in Bellefield Hall at 7 PM. We will also have the three of them here for part of Sunday and the following Monday too to meet with faculty and students. Christa Sadler was the Content Manager for the film and also the author of the book, *Introducing The Colorado* published by National Sawdust and This Earth Press.

*The beautiful film engages the environmental crises that resulted from the damming of the river; the flooding of an area of archeological significance; the competition for water rights for states through which the river runs; the impact upon indigenous people of Mexico who for millennia, used to be river connected people, but now exist in a parched landscape; a discussion of the Anthropocene; and the fact that the Colorado is no longer a river as it has no delta; and much more.*

*Would you like to make the film something you can make a Global Studies event? Would you like Christa Sadler to present your faculty and students?*

*If so would you consider being a sponsor for this film, at an amount you feel is appropriate?*

Wednesday 24 October 2018 Michael email to Annabelle

*I'm interested in this, yes, partly for the Anthropocene angle. It's a little hard to know how it fits global otherwise. It might be something we could do with WHC to think about an Anthropocene project we've been toying with. Let me check with Ruth Mostern and let you know soon.*

[Later that day, Michael email to Ruth]

*hoping we get to catch up tomorrow a little at the salon. If you can't make it, no worries, we'll try to schedule something.*

*See the below, from Annabelle Clippinger of PittArts. There's an anthropocene angle, as you can see. Might we want to try to get this Christa Sadler person in for something related to that? Her book seems like it's the kind of book I was dreaming of...<https://www.projectcolorado.com/thebook/>*

*Also, had a good interaction with some NEH grant folks at a conference this past weekend and was again excited about that option...*

[Later that day, email from Annabelle to Michael]

*The reference in the film to the Anthropocene is one of global/ planetary issue and another important reference is to indigenous people from Mexico who for millennia were Colorado river connected people- who now live in a parched landscape—the huge delta of the Colorado River was in Mexico as it emptied into the Gulf of California, but no longer does—in fact the Colorado River has not flowed to its once massive delta in Mexico since 1960, due to damming and water use diversion from the river.*

[some financial details omitted]

*Here is a description of Christa Sadler's book.*



The Colorado examines nine episodes in the history of human interaction with the Colorado River, from early prehistoric cultures to the Spanish explorations of the lower reaches of the river, the dam building frenzy of the early and middle 20th century, industrial agriculture and the current use of water throughout the region. This beautiful book combines current information, maps, and policy discussion in a stunning format that highlights the beauty and the grandeur of the river and its story. Although this is a companion volume to the film of the same name, the book stands alone and provides important history and context to one of the country's most important and most endangered watersheds. This is an important book for all those who know and love the Colorado River, or who would like to learn more about this extraordinary region.

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[Later that day, Wednesday 24 October, Ruth email to Michael]

*This is really great. It would be good to do something with her, also in conjunction with my CLST seminar. I've got my three visitors for the seminar mini-conference set, by the way. They'll be visiting over two weeks in mid-April, and they'll workshop student papers and each give a talk:*

*Kim De Wolff (<http://philosophy.unt.edu/people/kim-de-wolff>)*

*Jim Rock (<https://scse.d.umn.edu/marshall-w-alworth-planetarium/faculty-staff/james-rock>)*

Stephanie Kane (<https://sgis.indiana.edu/faculty/directory/kane-stephanie.html>)

*It would be cool to do more programming around their visits. James Scott will also be visiting around the same time, to deliver the History Department EP Thompson lecture. And Lisa Brush is pitching a visit by her dad Alan Brush, who's on tour for this new book: <https://catesby-trust.myshopify.com/products/mark-catesby-s-legacy-natural-history-then-and-now>.*

*I am planning to come to the Salon tomorrow if at all possible, and hopefully we can take up our schemes again. As I'm planning for the CLST seminar, I am finding a lot of brand-new work in this area that's come out just within the last year or so, so this is our moment, if we can figure out how to shoehorn a plan into our busy schedules!*

[Some financial back and forth omitted]

Tuesday 15 January 2019 Annabelle email to Michael and Ruth (and others)

*This an amended form of the email I sent in October:*

*Since then, I have completed the process and we are having the screening of the film, *The Colorado* on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at Bellefield Auditorium at 7 PM. The film will be introduced by Murat Eyuboglu, Christa Sadler, and Paola Prestini, and they will also participate in a Q&A after the film as well.*

*On the 8<sup>th</sup> Christa Sadler is going to speak to the Global Studies Center. We need a location and a time that is excellent for students and faculty that Monday! Christa likely has to leave around 7 PM that evening. When I spoke to Maja I suggested that Christa discuss the section of her book and the film on the Anthropocene, but there are some other good choices in this PDF for Christa. Take a look and get back to me as soon as possible. My contract requires the location, time and name of the workshop.*

*The film is:*

- *A documentary film about the North American West*
- *A musical tribute to land and water*
- *A cautionary tale about the environment*

*The Colorado has been hailed as one of the most profound documentaries in recent memory. This beautiful film explores the complex relationship between the Colorado River and the people who make use of it. As sonically pleasing as it is visually arresting, *The Colorado* boasts a score written by some of the most acclaimed composers living today, including Pulitzer Prize laureate John Luther Adams, Glenn Kotche, William Britton, Shara Nova and Paola Prestini. The film is narrated by Academy Award-winning actor Mark Rylance.*

*What makes this opportunity for our Pitt community so exciting, is that this film is truly interdisciplinary, connecting environmental sciences with issues of sustainability, history, film*

*studies, music and more. Having these artists and thinkers in residence allows our students, faculty and staff to have access to them, and to have key conversations with them.*

*Read a Review of the film in the New York Times*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/20/arts/music/review-the-colorado-a-music-driven-eco-documentary.html>

*I would very much like to **have significant author Christa Sadler's book connected with the film, **Introducing The Colorado** published by National Sawdust and This Earth Press, but costing \$60 retail, I would also appreciate a sponsor so **Pitt students could receive this important book for free.*****

Wednesday 16 January 2019 Michael email to Annabelle

*on our end, the articulation between Christa Sadle's work on the Anthropocene and our work in this area (GSC and WHC) is paramount. I would need to try to confer with Ruth, but my preference would be for a noon event on Monday that allowed us to be in dialogue with Christa about the book and the larger project. This would probably be a faculty event (a colloquium type of event) that would be open to grad students as well. We were thinking that the Sunday event was more (undergraduate) student focused. Let me confer with Ruth and get back to you...*

[Not much later that day, Michael email to Annabelle]

*as for the book (sorry I forgot that part), I don't think we can afford to provide copies for students. Maybe we can order a copy for the office, which students and other visitors can look at when they are waiting for advising, etc.?*

[some emails nailing down the time and the room for the Sadler talk are omitted]

Thursday 24 January 2019 Michael email to Annabelle, Ruth, and others:

*As for the title, why not just call it what the chapter is called: "Welcome to the Anthropocene: A brown bag conversation with Christa Sadler"*

[more omitted stuff about when we can have the room, tech set-up, etc.]

Wednesday 13 March 2019 Annabelle to Michael

*Here you are: If you have any more questions, don't hesitate to ask. Can't wait. Please invite as many faculty and students as you can to gthe film and to the workshop.*



### ***About the Workshop:***

*Christa Sadler will provide a one plus hour workshop/ lecture and a Q and A session to the Global Studies Center in 4130 Posvar Hall, from 12:00 PM- 1:00PM including Q&A session to faculty and staff from the Center on the topic “Welcome to the Anthropocene.”*

### ***About Christa Sadler:***

*As a rafting guide on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon and elsewhere in the region, Christa Sadler has called the rivers of the Colorado River Basin home for more than three decades. She holds a Master’s Degree in earth sciences and paleontology from Northern Arizona University, and a bachelor’s degree in physical anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley. Christa has been boating, hiking, teaching, and writing in the landscapes shaped by the Colorado River since 1988 and has published numerous books and articles about the region.*

### ***About the film and screening:***

*The Colorado has been hailed as one of the most profound documentaries in recent memory. This beautiful film explores the complex relationship between the Colorado River and the people who make use of it. As sonically pleasing as it is visually arresting, The Colorado boasts a score written by some of the most acclaimed composers living today, including John Luther Adams, Glenn Kotche, William Brittelle, Shara Nova and Paola Prestini.*

*The trailer: <https://vimeo.com/154412337>*

*List of screenings: <https://www.projectcolorado.com/#screenings1-1-section>.*

*PITT ARTS is pleased to bring the screening of the film, The Colorado to the University of Pittsburgh. The screening takes place at Bellefield Hall Auditorium at 7 PM on Sunday, April 7, 2019, The film will be introduced by one of the composers on the score of the film, Paola Prestini; the Director and Cinematographer of the film, Murat Eyuboglu; and author of the accompanying book The Colorado and Content Manager of the film, Christa Sadler. After the film, there will be a Q&A Session with the artists and the audience.*

*PITT ARTS is sponsoring the film and bringing the artists to campus. The following are University of Pittsburgh co-sponsors of the film screening: The Global Studies Center, The Film Studies Program, The Department of Music, and The Office of Sustainability. PITT ARTS extends their gratitude to National Sawdust, producer of the film The Colorado and for providing their artists to our campus.*

*Friday 15 March 2019 Michael email to Ruth forwarding the previous note from Annabelle: *back and trying to dig out. Not sure if you remember that we agreed to do this -- it's an Anthropocene initiative. I will prepare a flyer -- wanted to make sure it gets on the WHC (and your) calendar. more soon,**

Saturday 16 March 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Yes, very good, and it was not on my calendar, or on the WHC calendar, so I will make sure that is rectified and that we publicize it through our usual channels.*

*I am unfortunately out of town on April 7 - and I do remember the emails about this going around, so I am sorry if I missed some key thing. I will see if Molly is able to attend, if you want to be sure to have a presence from the WHC.*

*Thanks for the reminder, and good luck with the digging out, in all its perpetuity,*

[This thread continues across 19 emails, as we work to get the right images and cosponsors onto the flyer, coordinate the purchase of a copy of the book, etc.]

Wednesday 27 March 2019 Michael email to loads of people.

*Welcome to the Anthropocene! A conversation with William deBuys*

**Monday April 8, noon, 4130 Posvar Hall (Pitt)**

*Please join the Global Studies and World History Centers for a conversation with writer and conservationist [William deBuys](#). DeBuys is the advisor, co-script writer, and lyricist of [The Colorado](#), a film that has been hailed as one of the most profound documentaries in recent memory. Our conversation with Bill deBuys will focus on the attached chapter, "Welcome to the Anthropocene," from the book that accompanies the film.*

*THERE WILL BE A FREE SCREENING OF THE FILM IN BELLEFIELD HALL AUDITORIUM ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7 AT 7PM. (Sponsored by PITT ARTS and co-sponsored by The Global Studies Center, The Film Studies Program, The Department of Music, and The Office of Sustainability.)*

*About the film:*

*This beautiful film explores the complex relationship between the Colorado River and the people who make use of it. As sonically pleasing as it is visually arresting, The Colorado boasts a score written by some of the most acclaimed composers living today, including John Luther Adams, Glenn Kotche, William Britton, Shara Nova and Paola Prestini. DeBuys's book Salt Dreams of William deBuys is the original inspiration behind The Colorado.*

*Please share with interested colleagues!*



## Welcome to the Anthropocene!

A conversation with William deBuys

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April 8 | 12 PM | 4130 Posvar Hall

**William deBuys**, advisor, co-screenwriter, and lyricist of *The Colorado*, will lead a discussion on **how climate change is transforming the Colorado River Basin**. DeBuys is a writer, conservationist, and eminent scholar of the American West. His 1999 book *Salt Dreams* served as the original inspiration for *The Colorado*. He has long worked in environmental affairs. He directed the North Carolina Chapter of the Nature Conservancy, represented The Conservation Fund in the Southwest, and served as founding chairman of the Valles Caldera Trust, which administers the 89,000-acre Valles Caldera National Preserve.



[Notice that the event now features William deBuys, not Christa Sadler; after all of that wrangling, Sadler was unable to attend, and at the last minute the entire event was reworked. There were many, many, many emails among GSC staff which, among other things, document the heroic work of Maja Konitzer and Veronica Dristas, without whom no GSC events would be possible. The conversation with deBuys was fantastic, and the film was positively elegiac.]

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## Chapter 4: NOW what? Mapping a New Course...

Sunday 23 June 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*FYI – not sure whether you're on Adam's mailing list – nor do I remember what continent you're on right now.*

*I'm in Pittsburgh the rest of the summer, with the usual degree of busyness but also looking forward to meeting up when it's convenient,*



## **PostNatural Meditation**

**Saturday July 6th**

**10AM–1PM • 4913 Penn Ave.**

**FREE**

Buddhist, Daoist, Yogic, Franciscan and other spiritual traditions rely upon imagery of "Nature" as the basis of meditation practices.

**So, what happens in a post-natural world?** What happens to meditation if we can no longer access a "pure Nature," unaffected by humans? Where do we retreat that remains untouched by acid rain, climate disruption, deforestation, extinction of animal species, or the spread of plastics? *Do we need new metaphors for meditation in the anthropocene?* Might the post-natural interrupt or further what is most natural?

Join us for a workshop on meditation at the (end) times.

free. donations to the museum are welcome.

**Guided by:** Adam Lobel, PhD, Harvard University, is a scholar of philosophy and religion and a longtime teacher (Acharya) in the Shambhala tradition. His research focuses on Great Perfection Tibetan Buddhism, modern phenomenology, and inoperative studies (Heidegger, Foucault, Agamben). He is a Greenfaith fellow and is active in ecological and social justice movements. Adam teaches a critical style of contemplative training that seeks to avoid enclosure in neoliberal mindfulness while still disclosing effortless awareness.

Hosted by:  CENTER FOR POSTNATURAL HISTORY

Monday 27 June 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*Hi there!*

*I'm not on his list, but this looks fantastic and I've put it in my calendar.*

*I'm back now -- want to meet sometime next week for lunch at the Phipps and a conversation about the next steps?*

Wednesday 29 June 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*Yes, let's have lunch at Phipps next week and talk about next steps. I am just starting to sketch out the 2019-20 WHC budget and fall calendar, and I definitely want to make space for our initiative as part of that.*

*Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> would be ideal for me for lunch – does that work for you?*

[a couple of emails hashing out the time follow]

[I have no record of what happened at that meeting – notebooks inaccessible]

Thursday 1 August 2019 Jason Fitzgerald email to Ruth and Michael, following a meeting he had asked for earlier in the week:

*Thank you both again for an exciting and productive conversation on Monday! I'm excited to work together and hope you'll add me to all the relevant email lists about your work over the coming year. Before I write to Una Chaudhuri about your lunch invitation, I want to make sure I'm presenting it correctly to her. Below is my draft of a paragraph on it - have I got it right?*

*Second, I've just had a great conversation with [Ruth Mostern](#) (History) and [Michael Goodhart](#) (Political Science), the respective directors of Pitt's [World History Center](#) and the [Global Studies Center](#), both of whom are thrilled by your upcoming visit. As part of an ongoing joint project that they're launching, called "[Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss](#)," they've invited you to participate in a lunchtime event on Friday April 3<sup>rd</sup> among an interdisciplinary group of scholars thinking through issues of World History in Troubled Times (a tentative title for the series of which this event is a part). What this means for you: An opportunity to talk informally for about 10 minutes about how you see theatre/performance artists and activists responding to climate change (broadly defined) and then taking part in the open-ended conversation that follows thereupon, all while enjoying a delicious free meal. I thought this might provide a chance to talk about the collaborative art, research, and activist projects you've been a part of, including *Dear Climate* and *Climate Lens*, but really you can start the conversation wherever you like (and it really is meant to be informal - no writing, no powerpoint slides, no pressure). This event would take place on the Friday of your visit, thus rounding out your time here in Pitt before you return to NYC. I very much hope you'll say yes to this invitation, though I'm always happy to talk through it further, and/or to put you in touch with Ruth and Michael directly.*

*Also, here are the two books I mentioned on Monday, to add to your/our arsenal of smart thinkers on timely topics:*

*Nick Estes, [Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance](#)*

• Interview with Nick on The Dig podcast: <https://www.thedigradio.com/podcast/our-history-is-the-future-with-nick-estes/>

Greg Grandin, [\*The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America\*](#)

• Interview with Greg, also on The Dig: <https://www.thedigradio.com/podcast/end-of-the-myth-with-greg-grandin/>

I've also attached two essays on Chaudhuri that give a sense of her work and range on ecological topics. You can read an e-book of her *Stage Lives of Animals* via Pitt's Library: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/pitt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4710826>

[Ruth, later that day, replying to all]

*Yes, this looks great. I'm looking forward to next steps,*

[Michael, later that day, replying to all]

*I guess my only question is whether to harness this event specifically to the world history in troubled times series. That framing might be narrower than our eclectic bunch of Anthropocene people. Could we just say,*

*"...thinking through issues of radical change, loss, and the reconstruction of hope in this era."? I don't mind if it's part of the series, I'm just not sure about the explicit world history framing as a cue to her.*

*Not a big deal either way.*

[Ruth, replying to all]

*I agree, it makes sense not to link it with the World History Center "troubled times" series.*

Friday 2 August 2019 Jason, replying to all

*Done! Sent with that change. Thanks for the rewrite.*

Wednesday 7 August 2019 Michael to Ruth and others

*I'm thinking of applying for year of creativity money to try to get the [3Cs](#) to come to Pitt to do some kind of counter-mapping/ dis-orientation project with students. I am happy to reach out to them, but it might be nice to have some kind of project in mind. Any thoughts?*

[Later that day, Ruth replying to all]\

*I am super interested in this! It looks from their website like they are using some GIS and orientation toward a Cartesian earth, as opposed, for instance, to some of the work in [Map as Art](#), or [You Are Here](#) or [Atlas of Radical Cartography](#) – three books on my shelf. Their Mapping Duke sample assignment has students making gazetteers (spreadsheets of named and mappable locations). That's all good – and my suggestion would be to involve Boris Michev, the GIS librarian at Hillman, so that he can help to prepare and also ensure some follow through after the 3C group leaves.*

*Since you and I both do global things, maybe something globally facing? Maybe something that also connects to Epoch of Loss – mapping landscapes at risk, places to which students have affective relations, homes of beloved charismatic species at risk of extinction, etc?*

*I had two assignments in my History of Cartography class when I last taught it. One assignment had students map their homes three ways for three different audiences (by hand, using tracing paper) – e.g. pretend you work for the chamber of commerce, pretend you're a green space booster, etc. The other had them use historical imagery on Google Earth to find a place in the world that had changed dramatically (Fresno California, Dubai, the Aral Sea) and annotate maps with those changes. Both of these were great, but something like the latter is what I'm thinking about for the 3C workshop. There is a lot of satellite imagery out there that can easily depict ice cap retreats, urban sprawl, tar sand exploitation, etc.*

*As I am thinking about it, a Mapping the Anthropocene project using counter mapping methodologies would be amazing, and very compelling for me.*

*Let me know what you think!*

**Tuesday 13 August 2019** Michael replies to all

*Thanks to both of you. The reason I was interested in this group is that they appear to do workshops (though I can't quite figure out how to contact them about that...). I can't find any other outfit that seems to come in and do that.*

*And while I'm relatively innocent in the ways of map-making, I think these folks do a variety of things (the disorientation guides are less sciency). I'm thinking that they might be able to offer participants a variety of approaches that they might deploy in some kind of Anthropocene mapping project.*

*I'll take a crack at drafting a proposal based on what I can learn about their workshops and float it by you.*

*Also, by the way, open to other ideas on the creativity front (and Carla, thanks for the syllabus!) Just want to get something in early...*

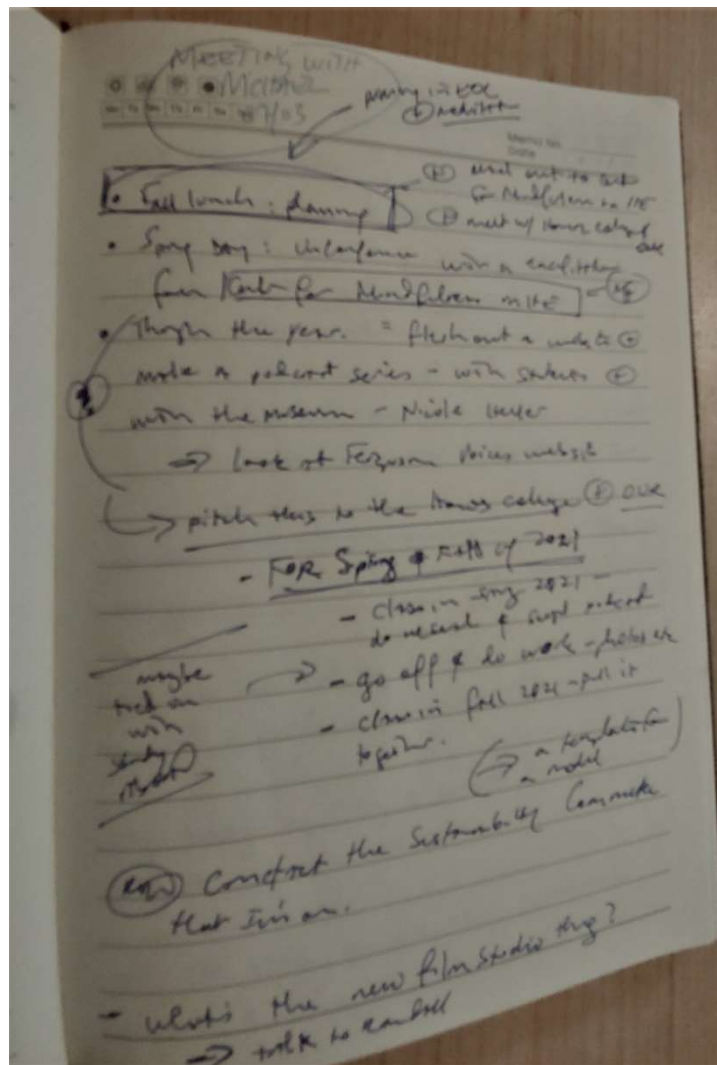
Monday 12 August 2019 Ruth email to Michael

I'm following up on our conversation at Phipps a month or so ago about doing a fall event. We talked about a lunch that focuses on the theme of Pausing – in the context of the Slow movement as well as the need for a contemplative stance about the Anthropocene. How do we pause in academia, how do we make space to pause, do we try to “get credit” for pausing-type activities, or is this outside that academic economy of recognition and prestige? We talked about having a meditation component. We presumably want to contact the on-and-off campus folks who came to our last event.

There's no hurry to get into the details of the planning. However, I'm trying to settle the World History Center fall calendar, and if this is going to be a publicly advertised event (I don't see why not?), I'd like to put it on my calendar, ideally as part of the World History in Troubled Times lunch series that I'm putting together (and of course not precluding it being cosponsored by Global Studies and advertised in other ways besides). The series is intended to be a collection of low-key conversations, though leaving a lot of room for flexibility and various formats. So, should we have a title – *Contemplating the Anthropocene*, perhaps? And a date? Maybe toward the end of the semester so that we have some time to decide what to do? The week of the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, perhaps?

While I'm looking at my notes, I'll also write down what else I remember from our July conversation at Phipps. We talked about a the fall event being a precursor to a Spring 2020 Unconference facilitated by the Center for Mindfulness in Higher Ed where we would talk about ways to think and subsequent initiatives worth pursuing.

We talked about preparing to pitch a class to the Honors College in the spirit of the Ferguson Voices project, a sequence for spring and fall of 2021, in collaboration with Nicole Heller at the museum and maybe Study Abroad and the new Pitt Studios thing with Randall Halle. Students would spend the spring semester doing research and storyboarding a project, they would





*spend the summer out in the world talking to people and taking pictures and video, and pull it together in the fall.*

*And I really like the idea of the mapping workshop that you're thinking about having something to do with nature/changing landscapes/students' personal and affective relationships to the land during our era of ecological crisis.*

*I think that's where we stand?*

*Meanwhile this just came across my social media: <https://is.gd/wKuczP>.*

[a bunch of back and forth ensues regarding dates for the fall event; Ruth replies to Michael]

*It looks like November 13 will work well for the WHC calendar. Shall we say 11:30 to 1:00? Tentatively at Phipps but location TBD? Shall we call it Epoch of Loss Planning Lunch, or something else?*

*For the purposes of the WHC calendar, I would ideally like to badge this as an event in our fall lunch series called (please confirm, David) "World History in Turbulent Times." Along with this lunch, we'll have a kickoff discussion about world history for activists, a discussion on forced labor and migration, and a discussion on indigenous activism. The details are still coming together. Of course the Epoch of Loss we will put on our calendar as a cosponsorship with Global Studies. Does that all sound good? We've still got a few days to adjust before sending our calendar to print.*

Monday 15 August 2019 Michael replies

*Nov 13 is great! We normally do our brown bags (which this will be part of-- maybe we need a better title) at 12. But I don't have a particular objection to starting this one at 11:30, if that's important for you.*

*I'm happy to try the Phipps again, though it wasn't cheap, and with a date set in advance, we don't have lots of options. Do we need to settle that now? Are there other cool venues we could take advantage off near campus?*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*I was thinking 11:30 only because we want to get to/from an off campus space so we want a bit of extra time -but we start most of our events at noon too, so I'm happy to do that.*

*I wonder if we can try for Veterans Pavilion in Schenley? It's just another 10 minutes walk (or a short drive) from Phipps, and I don't think it's too expensive. It would be nice to be in the park – but even though it's covered, it could be pretty chilly by mid-November.*

[Later that day Michael replies]

*love the idea -- we could bill it as a winter picnic, that might be nicely thematic. And if it's warm, well, that's thematic too!*

*On the downside, cold is one thing, but wet is another, picnics make a lot of waste, and a lot of schlepping. We could try for Bruce Hall -- it's cozy, and kind of quirkily delightful...*

[many many more emails about venues, catering, etc. Schenley Park visitor center emerges as the choice for the next lunch event in the fall]

Tuesday 27 August 2019 Ruth to Michael:

*These are the guys who did the Water: An Atlas project that I think I showed you. I just came across their Atlas in a Day workshop. I don't know if they do traveling things, but they would be awesome folks to invite if the other group you're thinking about doesn't work out.*

<https://www.guerrillacartography.org/atlas-in-a-day/>

[Later that same day, Ruth writes again to Michael]

*Did you see this in CHE? This is what I have become concerned about propagating in a facile way, but I have not yet found my way to an alternative that seems right*

[https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/20190823-tyson-fatalism?utm\\_source=cr&utm\\_medium=en&cid=cr&source=ams&sourceId=398654](https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/20190823-tyson-fatalism?utm_source=cr&utm_medium=en&cid=cr&source=ams&sourceId=398654)

Wednesday 28 August 2019 Michael replies:

*maybe we make this the theme/reading for the Nov. 13 gathering and pose just that question? I have some thought on the political side, but I would mainly like to hear from others? Whaddya think?*

Thursday 29 August 2019 Ruth replies

*That sounds great. I agree, I would like to think through this conundrum with other people. I too have thoughts, but I'm not completely happy with them.*

*I've recently come across the "hospice earth" metaphor, which I like. Here's an article about it by my favorite environmental philosopher, Thom Van Dooren: <https://overland.org.au/2019/08/hospice-earth/>.*

[Later that day, Michael replies]

*Yeah, we discussed "hospice ethics" with the Colorado folks when they were here also. I have real trouble with this -- who is supposed to be the patient/the one whose sick?*

*more on mapping soon, stuck at the conference...*

Saturday 31 August 2019 Ruth to Michael

*It's true....One of the ways I have put this when I've talked about it to students is that our current crisis is like the Chicxulub impact at the end of the Cretaceous, except that humans are both the meteor and the dinosaurs.*

Wednesday 4 September 2019 Michael to Ruth

*that about sums it up...*

*OK, let's assume this text will be the basis of our reflection at the Nov. 13 event. I'll check in with Veronica on where we are for the reservation and catering (they now seem to maybe have an in-house caterer, I'm not sure, but we're making the inquiries).*

[more logistics about the lunch, the flyers for the WHC series, the catering, etc.]

Wednesday 11 September 2019 Ruth to Michael

*Have you been following this story? It's getting a lot of traction, but the two sides are talking woefully past one another, and there is still no good language or policy for "pessimism...but" and "take action...but." This is definitely redoubling my thoughts that there is space for us to do something interesting. I myself don't have that language yet, but this is starting to look like something that's traditionally fundable, even as it includes the soulful meditative parts and the indigenous politics and history.*

*Here's one example – I've been bookmarking these.*

[https://www.currentaffairs.org/2019/09/franzens-privileged-climate-resignation-is-deadly-and-useless?fbclid=IwAR15E2e\\_YOqXJAgDBraaZ3MZ3MIJg\\_zPeWUsiW-O7IXkUUsmBjJ9LmBx2qs](https://www.currentaffairs.org/2019/09/franzens-privileged-climate-resignation-is-deadly-and-useless?fbclid=IwAR15E2e_YOqXJAgDBraaZ3MZ3MIJg_zPeWUsiW-O7IXkUUsmBjJ9LmBx2qs)

Thursday 12 September 2019 Michael replies

*Yeah, watching it unfold on Twitter. We could add the Franzen and one or two choice replies to the reading list for the Nov 13 event... Thanks for the link, I haven't read this yet, just trying to dig out from a too-early hole.*

*And yes -- something has to be solved here -- it's the old Gramsci point: how to reconcile pessimism of the intellect with optimism of the will. Maybe there will be a way to fund it. Or maybe we should just try to develop and sustain the reflective practice/process we've been talking about, and then see if we can write something out of that.*

Saturday 14 September 2019 Ruth to Michael

*Yes, the Gramsci point is just the thing –*

[At some point, we obviously met to map out the Mapping program; I don't have a record in my notes (at least not the ones to hand) and I can't make out the date in the photo, at least not in a way that matches the email record... Still, there was a meeting, here's the proof!]



Saturday 21 September 2019 Michael email to Ruth

*attached is a very rough year of creativity proposal. I hear they are spending money fast, so we need to get something in soon. I did my best to make something up based on what you wrote before that makes some sense and sounds compelling. I haven't contacted Boris, Lindsey, or Rick yet; I did write to the 3Cs to ask if they do on-site workshops. No reply, but I just wrote them. So, the budget is complete fiction, but based on experience, reasonable (Oh, we should include a dinner -- we'll add that).*

*Please make any changes or additions that you want, to any aspect of this -- it's just to get the ball rolling. It's a 500 word limit on the project description.*

*Also, please to confirm your ability/willingness to chip in at this level.*

*Sorry for the horrible delay. We had two major events in September, quite unusual, so the term is off to a crazy start. Hope you are getting all kinds of wonderful writing done!*

Monday 23 September 2019 Ruth replies

*I think this is wonderful – it ties together two of my greatest enthusiasms. There's infinite more verbiage that it would be possible to add about counter-mapping as a method and a politics – [here's one good article](#). There's also a lot to write about spatial humanities expertise around Pittsburgh and about creative and speculative approaches to digital humanities here. Scott Weingart at CMU would be the key person to reach out to, and I know he'd be enthusiastic to collaborate with this – and possibly even to chip in some funding? We could also invoke the new WHC digital history postdoc, Susan Grunewald, who is a GIS person and who has just joined us from CMU.*

*I'm on the fence about coming to the Global Studies Anthropocene conversation tomorrow – I am trying to hide out and not come to campus much while I'm writing – but it might be a good idea, and we can tie this up then, perhaps.*

[Also on 23 September, a thread that has been mostly basic Q&A with the 3Cs gets started in earnest. Michael writes to Tim:]

*thanks for you note, I'm pasting below the short proposal we've put together for this so that you can see what we're thinking. It's very much a draft/work in progress, so suggestions are welcome. We were thinking your part would be a one-day, intensive workshop, probably no more than a dozen students. Let me know what you think... As you'll see, we've written you in (though this hasn't gone anywhere yet, so don't worry).*

*Mapping is a compelling way to image and to imagine the physical, temporal, cultural, and political contexts we inhabit. Maps can be used to orient, re-orient, and dis-orient; some maps do all at once (whether intentionally or not!). The Global Studies Center and the World History Center propose a series of hands-on mapping workshops to advance and deepen our ongoing collaboration on the Anthropocene as an [Epoch of Loss](#).*

*Irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment in mitigation and adaptation. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing from the map; millennia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth; the streets of Miami flood on sunny days at high tide as a result of rising sea levels. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch.*

*We propose three workshops, to be held throughout the spring term, that challenge participants to explore and express their connection to climate change-related loss through mapping geoscapes and mindscapes of loss in the Anthropocene. This might include at-risk places or ideas to which they have deep affective ties – their homes, beloved places, species at risk, urban sprawl, glacial retreat, the proliferation of fracking, idea(l)s of mountains or forests or seas or cultural or political communities – anything they might wish to depict or disrupt using maps.*

*We will hold one intensive, day-long mapping workshop conducted by 3Cs (the counter-cartographies collective) on Pitt's campus. This workshop will emphasize the conceptual project of counter-mapping and the ways in which maps of all kinds can be used in orientation, re-orientation, and de-orientation. Two follow-up workshops will be led by Boris Michev, Pitt's GIS Librarian, and by local artists and makers including Pitt's Lindsey French (Studio Arts) and CMU's Richard Pell. Participants will create digital or analog maps that will be publicly presented in Pitt's new Global Hub at a public reception/event. We hope to hold all workshops in the Center for Creativity. We also propose to purchase several copies of three books that will be available to participants throughout the term as resources and references: *Atlas of Radical Cartography*; *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and other Maps of the Imagination*; *The Map as Art: Contemporary Artists Explore Cartography*; *Map Art Lab: 52 Exciting Art Explorations in Mapmaking, Imagination, and Travel*. We hope to develop the expertise to hold in-house mapping workshops on other topics in the future, making this a sustainable/recurring project.*

[Later that day, Tim replies]

*Great, thanks -- sounds like an amazing and timely workshop series. Will review this and write back more thoughts/questions soon!*

Tuesday 24 September 2019 Michael replies

*I give you absolution not to come tomorrow -- the turnout has been low, and while that conveys some information, it also tells me it's not a good use of your time. We'll focus on the Nov. 13 meeting.*

*We only get 500 words in the application, which is why I kept this brief. I'll make a couple of tweaks based on what you sent me.*

*Are you OK with the budget I put you down for? I heard back from the 3cs guy and they are preparing a cost estimate for me, so we'll see where we are...*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*Sounds good. I'm fine with the contribution from WHC, but I am running it by Molly to be sure she's on board. I'll nudge her if I don't hear from her by the end of today.*

*I've made some track-changes suggestions and comments on a draft after all, and here it is –*

*PS – I didn't comment on the budget – but I think a \$500 honorarium is a lot for a local university person (though I'd pay it to a local artist or community activist) – and it would be very difficult within policy to pay it to Pitt folks anyway.*

[Later that day Michael replies]

*thanks, will make the adjustments.*

Friday 27 September 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*[subject line “'radical cartography now'” workshop”] Just caught word on Twitter of this event happening today at Brown:*

<https://blogs.brown.edu/maps/>

*Potentially interesting for the year of creativity application –*

Thursday 26 September 2019 Ruth to Michael

*Another interesting participatory environmental mapping event, and info about a local artist who's leading it.*

*And also - yes to the proposed WHC contribution to the Year of Creativity event.*

----- Forwarded message -----

*WaterWalks: Creative Action for Community Justice is excited to announce Walk #3: Mapping Pittsburgh's Watersheds!*

*Watersheds are sites of interconnection: they link communities, supply our drinking water, and sustain ecosystems. In collaboration with artist Katy DeMent, we will assess the significance of our regional watershed system and create a handmade paper watershed map of Pittsburgh. We'll also engage with a "Digital Sandbox" provided by 3 Rivers Wet Weather. This interactive digital/physical "sandbox" demonstrates Pittsburgh's unique topography in relation to our regional watershed ecosystem. The event is free and open to everyone.*

*When: Saturday, October 12th; 1 PM - 4 PM*

*Where: Construction Junction; 214 N Lexington St, Pittsburgh, PA 15208*

***Please let us know if you'll be able to join: <http://bit.ly/waterwalk3>. Also, feel free to share this invitation far and wide! Our Facebook event is [facebook.com/events/379766179639305/](https://www.facebook.com/events/379766179639305/).***

***About Us:***

*WaterWalks: Creative Action for Community Justice is an ongoing collaboration between CMU students and local artists, activists, and community leaders who are confronting issues of water and environmental justice in Pittsburgh. The project is structured around a series of “Walks” (or creative participatory experiences) that draw from local histories, cultures, and politics;*

celebrate community action; and advocate for sustainable legislative change. These Walks are open to the public and serve as opportunities to share knowledge and engage issues of environmental justice through art.

Katy DeMent is a papermaker, printmaker, painter, ceramicist, sculptor, and metalworker. Her work often invites the viewer to playfully interact with the artwork through light and kinetic elements that bring imagery to life. Katy worked with artist Laura Ramie to illustrate and build the Pittsburgh Climate Change Crankie, a manually powered paper panoramic illustration that tells the story of Pittsburgh's environmental evolution. The Crankie helped start community conversations about Pittsburgh's industrial history, its environmental legacy, and the community's role in making improvements for the future through performances accompanied by hands-on art activities for all ages. To learn more about Katy and her artistic practice, visit [www.thepaperlady.com](http://www.thepaperlady.com).

3 Rivers Wet Weather, a nonprofit organization, is committed to improving the quality of Allegheny County's water resources by helping communities address the issue of untreated sewage and stormwater affecting the region's waterways. To promote the most cost-effective, long-term, sustainable solutions, 3RWW develops technical guidance and resources to assist municipalities with regulatory compliance, convenes forums to encourage a consensus-based approach for feasible and affordable wet weather planning, educates the public and advocates inter-municipal partnerships which will lead to consolidation of the fragmented municipal sewer collection system. For more information, visit [www.3riverswetweather.org](http://www.3riverswetweather.org).

Construction Junction supports and promotes conservation through the reuse of building materials. CJ is always trying to come up with ways to do more than reuse.

Finally, mark your calendars for **November 2, 2019** (time TBD) for a Walk with Ginger Brooks Takahashi.

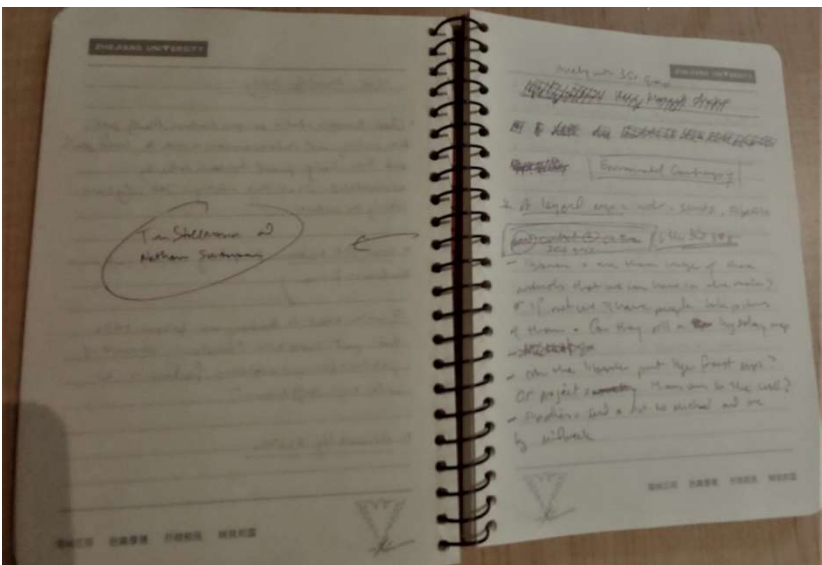
Tuesday 1 October 2019, resume of meeting with the 3Cs (see left):

Email from Tim @ 3Cs:

*Nathan from 3Cs & I just chatted about this, it's such an exciting proposal.*

We had a few background questions:

- What are your goals/outputs for this session in particular -- is it more of a conceptual intro to the possibilities of mapping or more concrete?





- *Who do you envision attending? Mostly faculty? Students? Community members?*
- *In intro workshops, we often like to focus on mapping spaces that it's easy to go out physically in (which would be campus in this case) -- would that make sense, or does the focus need to be broader?*
- *How do you see this first workshop in conjunction with the other workshops in the series? Should this be a launching point where participants start to conceptualize an idea that they will develop in the other workshops, or more of a standalone?*
- *When are you envisioning this taking place?*

*Also, an idea -- I know some folks over at the Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center, also housed at Pitt, and have long been impressed with their approach to teaching mapping & GIS. They have a really good 1-2 hour mapping 101 curriculum which is more quantitative-focused than what 3Cs tends to do but which could be a great complement. Could be a cool opportunity for a partnership if they were interested in also playing a role in this first workshop. I can reach out to them if it's something you would be open to or interested in, let us know!*

*Re cost & logistics -- I'm working full-time at [Research Action Design](#) these days, a worker coop that does co-design of research & tech with community groups & non-profits, and so would need to also contract a workshop through RAD. At our standard rate, taking into account prep time & facilitation time for 2 people for a full-day workshop, I'd estimate \$3,600, not including travel or materials. But let us know how that sounds, and we'd be happy to work with you to make this exciting workshop happen in a way that fits your budget.*

Friday 4 October 2019 Michael to Ruth

*I am going to try to get this submitted by Monday latest, maybe earlier. I got an estimate from the 3Cs, which I'm going to forward to you. It's on budget (especially if we reduce the local honoraria, which I think makes sense, per your earlier email). I wonder if you can send me a quick note that answers, as you would, Tim's questions (the 3Cs guy) and also helps us integrate/elaborate on the local workshop components?*

*also, 500 word limit on proposals, so I want to add judiciously to the proposal. I can incorporate stuff from your thoughts on Tim's question into the proposal and take care of it all from there...*

Sunday 6 October 2019 Ruth replies to Michael re: the 3Cs workshop

- *What are your goals/outputs for this session in particular -- is it more of a conceptual intro to the possibilities of mapping or more concrete?*

*RM Spitballing here... 1) help participants to see the climate crisis as something spatial, tangible and local, 2) help participants to see map making as a form of creative and affective response to climate crisis and/or as a form of political advocacy around climate and/or as a mode of mindfulness, 3) help participants understand that there are a range of modalities for map making, from the geospatial cartesian world of GIS to fully artistic renderings that are*

linked only loosely to the earth's surface. Finished work could be posted on our Epoch of Loss site.

- Who do you envision attending? Mostly faculty? Students? Community members?

RM I assume mostly students? But I would love to get some community members and if we can do a pedagogy tie-in, we can get faculty. I just remembered – I don't know why this slipped my mind – that I am teaching world environmental history in the spring with a one-credit optional digital mapping tie-in. I don't know what the cap on enrollment in the 3C workshop will be. I'll at least see that my TA attends, and maybe a few students on a first-come first serve basis? I wonder if there's pedagogy development money that we can tap into?

- In intro workshops, we often like to focus on mapping spaces that it's easy to go out physically in (which would be campus in this case) -- would that make sense, or does the focus need to be broader?

RM I think that would be awesome. Maybe stroll in Schenley, maybe tie in with the Anthropocene exhibit at Carnegie (they have the collection of Western PA plant specimens that have changed blooming /leafing dates), maybe something at Phipps?

- How do you see this first workshop in conjunction with the other workshops in the series? Should this be a launching point where participants start to conceptualize an idea that they will develop in the other workshops, or more of a standalone?

RM Standalone is easier, a series is more impactful, not sure what would be preferable...

- When are you envisioning this taking place?

RM No preference...I can send blackout dates based on spring travel as we get closer. For the spirit of the thing, sometime on the cusp between winter and spring would be nice.

Also, an idea -- I know some folks over at the Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center, also housed at Pitt, and have long been impressed with their approach to teaching mapping & GIS. They have a really good 1-2 hour mapping 101 curriculum which is more quantitative-focused than what 3Cs tends to do but which could be a great complement. Could be a cool opportunity for a partnership if they were interested in also playing a role in this first workshop. I can reach out to them if it's something you would be open to or interested in, let us know!

RM Brilliant. Yes! Also maybe reach out to the artist who's doing the map workshop through CMU that I forwarded to you recently? Maybe also Adam Lobel, who remains very interested in what we're doing and would like to get together sometime.

Thursday 10 October 2019 Ruth to Michael

Just picking up on loose ends here... Did the proposal go it? If so, do you have a final version of it that I can see? If not, do you need anything from me?

Looking forward!

Also still thinking about the Global Studies grad certificate, since I had to leave the meeting early last week.

Maybe we should meet up sometime and start talking about the November event, and we can also discuss some of these other things?

[Later that day Michael replies]

*Just went in. My life is -- ugh. Anyway, it's in.*

*Yes, grad certificate -- would love to think more about that with you.*

*let's meet soon to discuss the Nov 13 and other stuff. I think we read the Loss in Vogue piece (can't recall the title) and then Franzen and some responses, as a way to think through what we're doing. I'm traveling a lot this month. Would a 12:30 lunch on the 15th work?*

[Year of Creativity / Mapping proposal follows]

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### **Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene**

Maps are compelling forms for imaging and to imagining the physical, temporal, cultural, and political worlds we inhabit. Maps can be used to orient, re-orient, and dis-orient; some maps – intentionally or not – do all at once. The Global Studies Center (GSC) and the World History Center (WHC) propose a series of hands-on mapping workshops that provoke participants to learn how maps communicate while advancing and deepening our ongoing collaboration on the Anthropocene as an [Epoch of Loss](#).

Irrevocable loss has already begun, and it will accelerate even under the most optimistic scenarios for human ingenuity and investment in mitigation and adaptation. The nation of Vanuatu is disappearing from the map; millennia of odes to the Yangtze River dolphin refer to a species that will never again be seen on earth; the streets of Miami flood on sunny days at high tide as a result of rising sea levels. Such facts suggest that we need something more than good planning, and more than fresh approaches to familiar questions. We need new modalities of thinking about loss and commemoration that integrate traditional scholarly research with artistic and activist practices in ways appropriate for this epoch.

We propose three workshops, to be held throughout the spring term, that challenge participants to explore and express their connection to climate-related upheaval. They will map the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss: tangibly reflected by disrupted geosciapes, and affectively in their mindscapes, their imaginations of place. They may map at-risk places or ideas to which they have deep emotional ties – their homes, beloved places, species at risk, urban sprawl, glacial retreat, the proliferation of fracking, idea(l)s of mountains or forests or seas or cultural or political communities – anything they might wish to depict or disrupt using maps. They may produce maps of the geospatial world using geographical information systems, or they may make imaginative maps using many media. (The work of California-based textile artist Linda Gass is fascinating in this connection; we include a supplemental request to bring her/her work to Pittsburgh; GSC, WHC, and YoC would share the additional cost.)

We will hold one intensive, day-long mapping workshop conducted by [3Cs](#) (the counter-cartographies collective) on Pitt's campus. The 3Cs engage in “collaborations for engaged

research and cartography — transforming the conditions of how we think, write and map and the conditions about which we think, write and map.”

This workshop, aimed primarily at Pitt students but with a pedagogical focus for instructors as well, will emphasize the conceptual project of counter-mapping and the ways in which maps of all kinds can be used in orientation, re-orientation, and de-orientation. Two follow-up workshops will be led by Boris Michev, Pitt’s GIS Librarian, Scott Weingart, CMU Librarian, and by local artists and makers including Pitt’s Lindsey French (Studio Arts) and CMU’s Richard Pell, with support from the WHC Digital History post-doctoral fellow Susan Grunewald. Participants will create digital or analog maps that will be publicly presented in Pitt’s new Global Hub at a public reception/event. We hope to hold all workshops in the Center for Creativity. We also propose to purchase several copies of three books that will be available to participants throughout the term as resources and references. We seek to expand Pitt’s existing capacity in GIS map-making with expertise in the creative/imaginative work that unites art and technology, which is what the interdisciplinary, maker-focused prompt of the Year of Creativity permits us to do. We hope to develop the expertise to hold in-house counter-mapping workshops on other topics in the future, making this a sustainable/recurring project.

**Budget:**

3Cs daylong intensive workshop:

Workshop fee: \$3,600 (based on a quote from 3Cs)

Flights \$2,100 (3x \$700 each)

Hotel \$954 (3 rooms x 2 nights x \$159/night)

Books&Materials \$1,000

Total: \$7,654.

Possible Linda Gass visit (funds permitting)

Flight \$700

Hotel \$318 (2 nights x \$159/night)

Honorarium \$500

Total: \$1,518

Overall total: 9,172

YoC ask: \$3,827 (\$4,586)

GSC contribution: \$1914 (\$2,293)

WHC contribution: \$1914 (\$2,293)

Friday 11 October 2019 Ruth to Michael

*Thanks for submitting the proposal – it looks great. I sent you this link at some point to an event this afternoon, right? I am not sure whether I'll go, but one way or another we should reach out to these folks –*

<https://www.cjreuse.org/event/waterwalks-mapping-pittsburgh-watershed/>

*I'm listening to a talk right now (skyping into a conference that I'm not attending in person), so more later –*

[Also that day, Michael belatedly gets back to Tim at the 3Cs, after having to be nagged]

*Sorry, lots of pans, lots of fires. Here's some spitball answers from myself and Ruth Mostern, my co-conspirator in this.*

*Two things: we accepted the \$3600 figure (plus travel and lodging) as a good one and (2) submitted the grant request, so moving forward there. We hear by the end of the month, hopefully.*

*Here's our current thinking re your questions:*

- *What are your goals/outputs for this session in particular -- is it more of a conceptual intro to the possibilities of mapping or more concrete?*

*1) help participants to see the climate crisis as something spatial, tangible and local, 2) help participants to see map making as a form of creative and affective response to climate crisis and/or as a form of political advocacy around climate and/or as a mode of mindfulness, 3) help participants understand that there are a range of modalities for map making, from the geospatial cartesian world of GIS to fully artistic renderings that are linked only loosely to the earth's surface. Finished work could be posted on our Epoch of Loss site.*

- *Who do you envision attending? Mostly faculty? Students? Community members?*

*Mostly students? But we'd love to do a pedagogy tie-in to help equip and embolden faculty we can get faculty. Depends on workshop participation capacity...*

- *In intro workshops, we often like to focus on mapping spaces that it's easy to go out physically in (which would be campus in this case) -- would that make sense, or does the focus need to be broader?*

*Awesome. Maybe stroll in Schenley Park, which abuts campus; maybe tie in with the Anthropocene exhibit at Carnegie Museum of Art (they have the collection of Western PA plant specimens that have changed blooming /leafing dates), maybe something at Phipps Conservatory, also adjacent to the campus -- to tie in Anthropocene...*

- *How do you see this first workshop in conjunction with the other workshops in the series? Should this be a launching point where participants start to conceptualize an idea that they will develop in the other workshops, or more of a standalone?*

*Hm. Standalone is easier, a series is more impactful, not sure what would be preferable.... We'll for sure urge participants to do all three, and there's the thematic tie. I don't think we need to work too hard on direct coordination.*

- *When are you envisioning this taking place?*

*Spring term, maybe March? We're flexible..*

*Re: Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center,*

*Yes! Whether to do that as part of a separate GIS workshop or in conjunction with this one is a question to think more about.*

Saturday 12 October 2019 Michael to Ruth

*Yes-- you sent, and we should reach out to them. I'm in Connecticut actually attending a conference so I can't go today. Did you get my proposed lunch and coffee dates?*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*Great – I think I'm going to go, so I'll report back! I have your email with dates for meeting. My session is over, so I'll respond in a minute.*

*I could do 12:30 on the 15<sup>th</sup> if need be, though I'm trying to protect that as a work at home day. Do you have time Monday (except 12-2) or Thursday (before noon or after 3)? If not, I can work with Tuesday.*

[some email back and forth about dates.... Later that day Michael replies]

*I'm actually going to the Ibram Kendi talk at 7:30. If you are also, we could meet later, over drinks (6?). If we do 4:15 I'll need to stick to coffee... But Happy to go to the uclub for that.*

Sunday 13 October 2019 Ruth replies

*I'm not sure yet about going to the Ibram Kendi talk, so maybe we should stick with 4:15. Let's tentatively say the UClub roof terrace, but we can touch base closer to the time.*

*The mapping workshop yesterday was fabulous. I'm very committed to working Katy Dement into our plans and maybe inviting her to our November activity. One of her projects is the Climate Change Crankie (<http://www.thepaperlady.com/special-projects>), a scroll that illustrates environmental change. She's a great educator, artist, and close observer of the*

landscape. She also runs world mapping workshops. I talked with her a bit about our initiatives, but not in a ton of detail.

The event was directly hosted by a group of CMU students out of the Design School, and it was partly sponsored (funded?) in some capacity by 3 Rivers Wet Weather ([3riverswetweather.org](http://3riverswetweather.org)); their ED Mark Wolinsky was there. There was also a neat interactive digital map watershed sand box from Civic Mapper ([www.civictmapper.com](http://www.civictmapper.com)), and a couple of folks from there came to demo it.

Looking forward to next steps!

[Later that day Michael replies]

OK, let's do that -- 4:15. I am coming from another meeting so could be a few minutes late...

Tuesday 15 October 2019 Ruth to Michael

Really interesting guy to be in touch with around Epoch of Loss stuff –

----- Forwarded message -----

Nice to meet you both at the Global Indigeneity meeting yesterday, and for arranging for the time for me to make an announcement. Do you mind sending this email to the World History Center email list, for the benefit of those who weren't present? Thanks!

---

As Director or Research for [The Natural History Museum](#), a traveling, pop-up museum that highlights the social and political forces that shape nature, I want to spread the word about a programming series on energy history, environmental justice, and Indigenous resurgence that we are hosting in Pittsburgh next week. It would be great to have a strong turn-out from Pitt and CMU.

[Power Beyond Extraction](#) is an event series that looks at power in terms of both energy and the people power needed to bring about the just transition to a clean energy economy. Timed to coincide with the Shale Insight Conference, an annual convening and conversation about the future of energy hosted by the petrochemical industry, Power Beyond Extraction invites community leaders, activists, artists, and scholars to contribute to this conversation of [regional, international, and inter-generational importance](#).

More information on these events below, and links to the Facebook pages where we'll livestream them for an international audience. Please share with your students and Pittsburgh-area networks. Thank you!

[Later that day Ruth wrote]

Here are links to all the participants in the workshop I was at last weekend that I told you about

----- Forwarded message -----

**Subject:** WaterWalks: Mapping Pittsburgh's Watersheds Follow Up & Survey

Hello, and thank you for joining us on Saturday (10/12) for WaterWalks: Mapping Pittsburgh's Watersheds!

We hope you enjoyed the "Walk" (with very little walking) and that you made new connections. Thanks to everyone for sharing insight and contributing your creativity. We learned so much from all of you! Thanks also to our collaborators at [CivicMapper](#), [3 Rivers Wet Weather](#), [Construction Junction](#), and [Katy DeMent](#).

If you'd like to provide feedback on the event or WaterWalks more broadly, please consider filling out [this survey](#). We truly value your feedback and will use it to guide our work moving forward. Also, feel free to reach out to us directly at any time.

Photos from the event can be found [here](#). Be on the lookout for a photo of the completed map in the coming days! We'll also be sending out an email in the next week or so with detailed information on our upcoming Walk (date TBD).

Thanks again, and we hope to see you soon!

---

[a long string of emails about details for the lunch at Schenley Park visitor center. We pick up with the draft invitation to participants]

Tuesday 29 October 2019 Michael to Ruth

Dear colleagues,

we write to invite you to the next meeting of our working group on the **Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss**, on **Wednesday Nov. 13 from noon to 1:30 pm** at the **Schenley Park Visitor Center**, just across the street from Phipps Conservatory. At this meeting, we'll have a brief, guided meditation, followed by lunch and a discussion of two short articles: *What If We Stopped Pretending?* (The climate apocalypse is coming. To prepare for it, we need to admit that we can't prevent it), by Jonathan Franzen, and *Apocalypse Chic* (For some professors, a shallow, fashionable nihilism is all the rage), by Charlie Tyson. You can access both readings on the Global Studies Center's [Anthropocene](#) web page (scroll to the bottom of the page and click on "materials" tab). A vegan lunch will be served.

If you would like to attend, please **RSVP** using this [link](#) by **Wednesday, Nov. 6**, so that we can give a count to the caterers. As before, this event is co-sponsored by the Global Studies and World History Centers, and it's doing double duty as the next installment of the World History in Troubled Times lunch series.

We hope to see you there!



---

*Please edit as you like, Ruth. Also -- should one of us reach out to Adam + Michelle about a possible opening meditation (indicated in the invitation)?*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*This reads well. It just needs a capital-w in the first sentence. I'll be happy to reach out to Adam and Michelle. I think I have their emails, but can you send them again, just in case.*

*I have minor cold feet about our two readings both being white American men - especially since Franzen writes from a place of such privilege - for which we'll critique him, but still. I think we should keep these pieces, but add a third short one. I have some things in mind, but I'm on the move right now, so I'll send a suggestion or two tomorrow.*

Wednesday 30 October 2019 Michael replies

*wasn't sure about Tyson, but if that's the case, then yes. suggest away, and I'll think about it too.*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*How about this one?*

<https://medium.com/s/story/sorry-yall-but-climate-change-ain-t-the-first-existential-threat-b3c999267aa0>

[Later that day Michael replies]

*Yes, let's use that, in addition to the other two. Here's a Word version for the Web site. (attached). Veronica, please get those up on our web page.*

*Here's the revised email, ready to go out to our Anthropocene list.*

*Dear colleagues,*

*We write to invite you to the next meeting of our working group on the **Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss**, on **Wednesday Nov. 13 from noon to 1:30 pm** at the **Schenley Park Visitor Center**, just across the street from Phipps Conservatory. At this meeting, we'll have a brief, guided meditation, followed by lunch and a discussion of three short articles: *What If We Stopped Pretending?* (The climate apocalypse is coming. To prepare for it, we need to admit that we can't prevent it), by Jonathan Franzen; *Apocalypse Chic* (For some professors, a shallow, fashionable nihilism is all the rage), by Charlie Tyson; and, *Climate Change Ain't the First Existential Threat**

*(People of color know about building movements, about courage, about survival), by Mary Anaise Heglar. You can access the readings on the Global Studies Center's [Anthropocene](#) web page (scroll to the bottom of the page and click on "materials" tab).*

*A vegan lunch will be served.*

*If you would like to attend, please **RSVP** using this [link](#) by **Wednesday, Nov. 6**, so that we can give a count to the caterers. As before, this event is co-sponsored by the Global Studies and World History Centers, and it's doing double duty as the next installment of the World History in Troubled Times lunch series.*

*We hope to see you there!*

*Ruth Mostern and Michael Goodhart*

[six or seven more administrative messages about email addresses and when to hit “send” follow]

Thursday 31 October 2019 Michael to Adam, Michelle, and Ruth:

*Dear Adam and Michelle,*  
*you should have received an invitation that the Global Studies and World History Centers are jointly sponsoring on Nov 13 at noon at the Schenley Park Visitor Center.*

*You might have also noted a reference to beginning with a brief guided meditation. In a classic horse follows cart move, we're now writing to ask if we might prevail on one or both of you to lead us in the brief meditation. Something along the lines of 10 minutes, just to help us set a tone and focus on our work (the discussion of the three short readings mentioned in the email, which we'll lead).*

*If this seems possible and interesting to you, we'd be most grateful. If not, we totally understand, and we'll find another path. No worries either way -- and PLEASE, there's no quid pro quo -- we want you both to attend REGARDLESS of whether you have an interest in leading the guided meditation or not.*

[Adam and Michelle respond graciously to our “invitation” and ask for some time to confer. Michelle confirms that she will attend, and there is a little bit of logistics]

Monday 4 November 2019 from the Year of Creativity

*Dear Michael Goodhart,*

*Thank you for your proposal for Year of Creativity funding to support Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene. The review committee is delighted to be able to provide \$3,054 in support for the project. Information about your project will be shared with the Year of Creativity's Signature Events & Initiatives Working Group and the Promotion & Marketing Working group. When you add the project to the [University Events Calendar](#), please use the tag 'Year of Creativity' and the hashtag '#PittCreates' so that the project will appear on the [Year of Creativity website](#).*

*Members of the committee noted the active engagement students and other participants will have in the workshop, and they hope you will work to recruit participants from a wide range of*

*disciplines. Committee members were curious about whether you have reached out to individuals and departments across campus with expertise in GIS; if not, they encourage you to do so. In addition, please reach out to the Center for Creativity to reserve space for the workshop as soon as possible.*

*In regard to receiving disbursement of funds for your proposal, the Office of the Provost will contact your Business Administrator, as indicated on your application. In addition, you will be invited to a celebratory event with the Provost on April 14th, about which more information is forthcoming.*

*Congratulations, and we look forward to participating with you in the Year of Creativity.*

---

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*Good news!*

[Later that day Michael replies]

*yes, indeed. I'll reach out to the 3 Cs guys right away about scheduling a date. Though maybe we should talk dates first...*

*Also, so far it looks like all of the Anthropocene folks are from our regular list. Can you goose your World History in Turbulent Times list again? I'll send a reminder tomorrow to our list tomorrow.*

Tuesday 5 November 2019 Ruth to Michael

*Let's plan a date for the spring event. I'm traveling the week of Feb 10-14, I'm hosting a visitor the last week of February – and February seems cold and soon in any case. March I'm free except 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, and April is pretty open. Maybe late March or early April? We'll have a chance of good weather if we want an outdoors component, but not too close to the end of the semester? I assume we want a weekday?*

[Later that day Ruth writes]

*Just came across this project –*

<https://notanatlas.org/about/>

[Later that day Michael starts a new thread]

*Just wanted to start a new thread on the Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene workshops.*

*Here's a bullet-point checklist of what we need to do, extracted from the proposal:*

- 3Cs workshop -- daylong intensive
- follow-up workshop by Boris Michev, Pitt's GIS Librarian, Scott Weingart, CMU Librarian, with support from the WHC Digital History post-doctoral fellow Susan Grunewald.
- Follow-up workshop by local artists and makers including Pitt's Lindsey French (Studio Arts) and CMU's Richard Pell,
- We hope to hold all workshops in the Center for Creativity.
- Showcase event for the maps in the Global Hub

*So, we need to set dates for the workshops, schedule time in the Center for Creativity, reach out to the partners we've implicated in the follow-up workshops, and book a date for the concluding event/showcase in the global hub.*

*Two big questions*

*1) How to divide the labor? Ruth, I propose that we handle all of the 3Cs stuff, as I've already been in touch with them and have the connection. Maybe you can take the lead on the GIS one, using Susan as a resource? And then we can connect dots on the third -- Kirsi Jansa is another person to get involved.*

*2) When to schedule the workshops? Do we need to have the 3Cs workshop first -- if so, we'll need to do it earlier in the term (Ruth, this refers back to your earlier email). As soon as we have a general timing, I can reach out to the 3Cs guys. Should we do it on a Saturday? Or on a Friday? (it's meant to be all day). Once we have that in place, we can schedule the follow-ups.*

*I am thinking February, sadly, for the 3Cs if we can. Given Ruth's commitments, that would mean the third week of Feb (17-21). That leaves us enough time for the other two events. Thoughts?*

*Oh, a third thing*

*3) should we see if there is other funding to bring Linda Gass in? I could reach out to Sylvia Rohr, Director and Curator of the University Art Gallery...*

Thursday 7 November 2019 Ruth replies

*Thanks for kicking this off, Michael.*

*One thing I've learned since we started planning this is that the technical director of my World Historical Gazetteer project, Karl Grossner, will be based in Pittsburgh in the spring (<http://kgeographer.com/>) (<http://whgazetteer.org/>). It would be great to have him involved in some way; and I am increasingly thinking about how to frame gazetteers one kind of counter-mapping – a way of holding space for the idea that Jerusalem and Al-Quds, New York and Mannahatta, and other contested places all coexist with one another on the map. We've added a bunch of physical geography, even ocean currents and biomes, to the gazetteer. He can join the GIS workshop day.*

*I'm happy to take the lead in organizing the GIS (and other digital things) workshop, working with Susan, Boris, Karl etc.*

*We can work together on the artists/makers workshop. It would be great to bring in Linda Gass for that (or for an exhibit in conjunction), if there's funding and if her schedule permits. If not, the folks we have in town – including Katy Dement as well as the folks you've named – would make for a good event.*

*We might also want to loop in Abigail Owen early on, since she is so well connected to these kinds of things via CMU.*

*Week of February 17-21 is fine with me for the 3cs workshop, and I could also do 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> – I will just have to juggle between this and another visitor, for whom I am the secondary host. Shall we also sketch in dates (at least weeks) for the other two workshops so that we can start lining people up?*

*I would ideally also like to link this together with the digital mapping one-credit trailer attached to my Environmental History class, so we should talk about logistics about numbers of attendees we can accommodate, etc.*

*I think this is all relatively straightforward, but it might be good to have an in person meeting sometime next week in any case, since that can be more efficient and more generative than a ton of emails – and maybe invite Susan and Abigail to join us. Are you all free prior to lunch on the 13<sup>th</sup>? Or afterwards?*

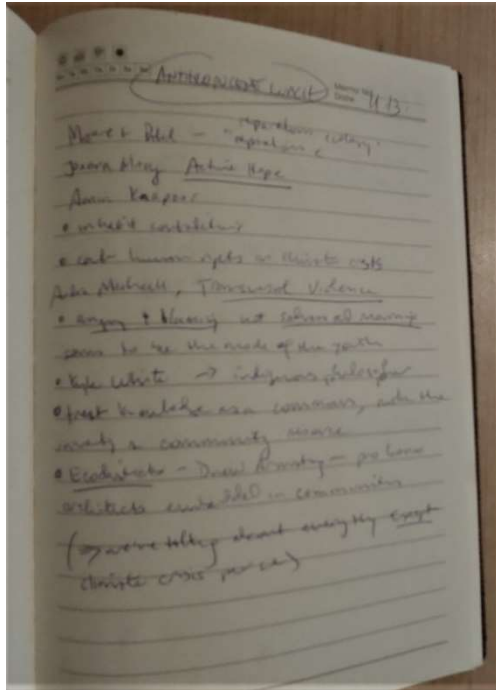
Sunday 10 November 2019 Michael replies

*Ruth, thanks for all this. I can meet you at 11 am on Wednesday -- shall we say, at the Phipps cafe? That way we're where we need to be (almost). I am glad to invite Susan and Abigail (though I know she's swamped with the Sawyer seminar). Meanwhile, Veronica and I will confirm some dates in our meeting tomorrow so that I'll be ready.*

Monday 11 November 2019 Ruth replies

*Perfect – Phipps Café on Wednesday. I'll see if Susan and Abigail can make it.*

Wednesday 13 November 2019, Second Anthropocene lunch.



[Here we need a brief interjection about what has come to be called “The Chocolate Cake incident” (see below). We had some time for mingling and conversation, followed by lunch. Our discussion began over dessert and coffee. Following that, a young man (presumably a Pitt student) stood up and made remarks to the effect of “It’s all well and good for you to sit here and talk while eating vegan chocolate cake, but what are you doing to address the impending climate disaster?”]

Wednesday 13 December 2019 C writes to Ruth and Michael

*Thank you for inviting me to the Anthropocene-meeting. You ask very important questions.*

*This might be of interest to you: Michelle King, retired professor of psychology and sustainability*

*educator [Mary Beth Mannarino](#) from Chatham, director of education [Laurie Giarratani](#) and learning specialist Mary Ann Steiner from CMNH and I planned and organized a **"Brave&Heartfelt" climate communication and engagement workshop at the p4 Climate Summit** (where Peduto made his now famous petri-statement). Here's our powerpoint - it gives you an idea of our session. Our goal was to do what our ecological and climate challenges require from us all: Go beyond our comfort zones, change and try to do things differently. The workshop was highly interactive. Based on what we saw and the feedback we received, people found it very useful.*

[Click to Download](#)

*The summit organizers requested that we combine a resource toolkit for our workshop participants, about 100 non-profit leaders - it got quite extensive and contains many interesting links and readings. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/10ki1uyjgZCjeZHqA8yoPhqI8J3R1TkpRjxn3wF-P-MA/edit?usp=sharing>*

*If you are planning to extend the circle, please consider inviting Mary Beth, Laurie and Mary Ann and Mandi Lyon (also from CMNH/Climate in Urban and Rural Systems Partnership) to the conversation. I heard that Nickie Heller is already part of the group - great.*

*The **chocolate cake incident** [my emphasis] is so descriptive - this all is so difficult and people don't know how to turn their fear/anger/anxiety/frustration into constructive energy and action. Check this out, an offering by the Greater Good Science Center at Berkeley. How could we bring this to our region? A one-day workshop on Combining Kindness and Assertiveness in Important Relationships with (neuro)psychologists.*

[https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/what\\_we\\_do/event/friendly\\_fearless\\_combining\\_kindness\\_and\\_assertiveness\\_in\\_important\\_relations?utm\\_source=Greater+Good+Science+Center&utm\\_campaign=6ce0914dae-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_GG\\_Newsletter\\_Oct\\_22\\_2019&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_5ae73e326e-6ce0914dae-70067259](https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/what_we_do/event/friendly_fearless_combining_kindness_and_assertiveness_in_important_relations?utm_source=Greater+Good+Science+Center&utm_campaign=6ce0914dae-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_GG_Newsletter_Oct_22_2019&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5ae73e326e-6ce0914dae-70067259)

*Thanks again for your brave and compassionate approach!*

Friday 15 November 2019 Ruth replies

*This is a fantastic set of links and connections – thank you so much! We will definitely follow up on all this.*

*The “chocolate cake incident” – I like that name for it – has been much on my mind as well. I take it as a good sign! If we are calling on people to get more emotionally connected to the reality of climate collapse, it’s important to see people getting out of their comfort zones and trying to pull other people out with them. I could imagine someone doing that in more of a spirit of generosity than that guy displayed, but the general idea was just right.*

*Very much looking forward to talking with you about next steps, and thank you so much for coming,*

Saturday 16 November 2019 Michael replies

*Kirsi, echoing my thanks for the information you've shared. I LOVE Friendly and Fearless, and am going to talk to some people on campus about bringing that to Pitt somehow. As for the incident, I'm with Ruth -- I kind of admired the guy, even if he didn't do it so great. I think I know where it came from, modeled on an earlier Fossil Free Pitt Protest at the last Trustees meeting, which was very effective. We'll stay in touch, Kirsi, thanks so much for joining us!*

Thursday 14 November 2019 we receive this email from a CMU colleague:

*Thank you again for organizing yesterday’s luncheon. I enjoyed the meditation and as always (un)learned a lot from the discussion. I truly appreciate your creating space for critical dialog and your openness to whatever that inspires (although I wish it hadn’t taken such a performative and aggressive form in that one instance yesterday).*

*Besides wanting to say “thanks,” I’m writing for two reasons: One is to follow through on my promise to Michael to send along some of Audra Mitchell’s work. At risk of becoming a broken record, her writing on “transversal” violence, “lifework,” and related matters has been a big inspiration for me, particularly in thinking about how to breakdown the barrier between academic research and collaboration with ‘communities’. In addition to the attached articles, here are links to a couple of her serial blog essays that may be of interest:*

*1<sup>st</sup> in a two-part series on lifework: <https://worldlyir.wordpress.com/2016/09/14/lifework/>*

*1<sup>st</sup> in a three-part series on extinction-as-violence: <https://worldlyir.wordpress.com/2017/07/28/decolonizing-against-extinction-part-i-extinction-is-violence/>*

*For good measure, I'm also attaching an article by Ellen Yen-Kohl and the Newtown Florist Club Writing Collective that I've often reflected on as a model for connecting university- and community-based knowledge production. No pressure of course to read or respond to any of this, but if you're interested I'd love to continue discussion on these matters – and to read any topically related works that have inspired you.*

*Finally, an apology and retroactive introduction. I took the liberty of inviting our Sawyer Seminar postdoc, Z to the lunch. You may have already met her, but either way I'd intended to send an email introduction in advance. My apologies for failing to do so! Given her areas of research, I figured you'd be keen to have her there, but nonetheless I should have made the connection first.*

Friday 15 November 2019 Ruth replies

*These articles look great, D, thanks! Every so often I remember that my core training is in medieval Chinese history. The rest of it I'm making up as I go along.*

*I actually feel pretty good about the student who stormed out. If we're trying to make a space in which people's anger and other strong emotions get validated and centered as a part of academic practice to a greater extent than is generally acceptable, this is just what we're signing up for. A bit of disruption of scholarly civility is just right.*

*Z was a great presence – thank you so much for inviting her and for making the introduction.*

*We're definitely looking forward to more events, whatever form they might take.*

*Have a great weekend,*

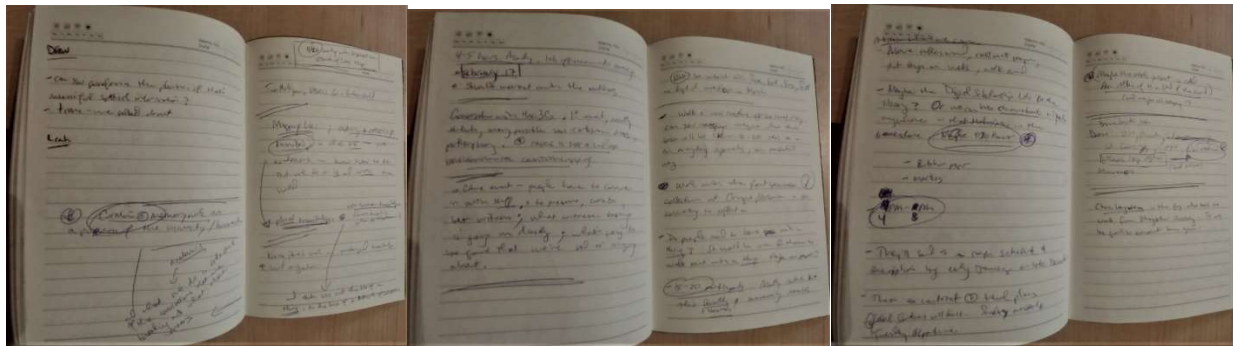
Monday 18 November 2019 Michael replies

*yes, thanks C, for all of this. I had "shared space" with Z in the Sawyer Seminar but not really met her, so this was a double bonus for me.*

Tuesday 26 November 2019. A whole bunch of emails led to a meeting scheduled with the 3Cs to be held today, online.

[images of Ruths notes follow]





Wednesday 4 December 2019 Ruth email to Michael

*This is a good one. Check out the part about the group making a lexicon for new emotions. That's the sort of project you and I are groping toward, I think.*

[https://believermag.com/under-the-weather/?fbclid=IwAR2-cYxs8O5j4Na1qrdAwC68wsTiAD1\\_VG-MVA4oYK8rPSNB\\_bsSsAqum5c](https://believermag.com/under-the-weather/?fbclid=IwAR2-cYxs8O5j4Na1qrdAwC68wsTiAD1_VG-MVA4oYK8rPSNB_bsSsAqum5c)

Wednesday 11 December 2019 Ruth writes

*This is a beautiful article that connects with the ways in which I am collaborating with each of you (and I should introduce the two of you in Pittsburgh in January). Karl - increasingly I am thinking about the ethical motivation of the World Historical Gazetteer and related projects as being about this kind of work of restoration of names to places where they have been effaced; but I also think that the countermapping concept goes beyond even what the most expansive of gazetteers can do, and I'm interesting in seeing where that goes in the workshops that we're doing together this spring, Michael. I wonder if we want to circulate this article to the 3Cs folks? Or link it to the notice we send out about the workshops?*

<https://emergencemagazine.org/story/counter-mapping/>

[Later that day Ruth writes again]

*PS - this was also in my inbox this morning, here in Hangzhou -*

*EASA Environment and Anthropology Network invites paper proposals to our panel "Privileged fear: Europe and the concern for environmental catastrophes" at the 16th EASA conference "New anthropological horizons in and beyond Europe" in Lisbon, Portugal, 21-24 July 2020\*.*

*The panel convenors are \*Aet Annist\* (University of Tartu, EE) and \*Nina Moeller\* (Coventry University, UK), with \*Thomas Hylland Eriksen\* (University of Oslo) as the discussant.*

Short abstract :

*We will consider how Europe as a region relatively sheltered from climate and environmental disasters deals with the increasing awareness of the potential of future crises: how do the privileged fear? What relations does this fear forge between groups within the region and with the rest of the world?*

Long abstract :

*Globally, climate change has already brought severe changes to some regions, as floods, droughts, ravaging fires, or hurricanes. Europe has so far remained a relatively sheltered region due to both climatic conditions as well as ability to respond to disasters. This panel seeks to analyse the gaze and actions of the privileged as they find themselves on the inside of their safe havens, looking out at the approaching danger. How does Europe - its people, political institutions, economic stakeholders - respond to clashing experiences of contained catastrophes and the strengthening conviction of future turmoil? We welcome empirically informed and/or theoretical discussions of the fears, hopes and responses in Europe in the face of increasing awareness of the environmental crises. From climate marches and eco-villages to innovative solutions, from survivalists and grieving groups to deniers, global North is in a very different position than the rest of the world when confronting danger as well as solutions. How does privilege impact affect? What do we fear differently? What views of others form when the border that separates "us" from "them" comes from relative climate safety and environmental dispossession? But also - what strata form in relation to having stakes in the future? Who is already affected within this relatively secure part of the world - from migrants to the poor and young people - and how? How can different groups afford to be afraid? What relations does this shelteredness and concomitant privileged fear forge between Europe and the world already affected?*

Monday 23 December 2019 Michael replies

*super interesting!*

Wednesday 15 January 2020 Ruth writes to Michael:

*This is not very well built out yet, but with this name and concept, I figure it should be in our consciousness:*

<http://histecon.fas.harvard.edu/climate-loss/index.html>

Monday 6 January 2020 we get a note from Tim of the 3Cs

*Happy New Year! Nathan & I wanted to run our draft abstract & agenda by y'all -- let me know if you have any thoughts/questions, and it might be good to do a call in the next few weeks to further develop the plan; we definitely imagine you will have some helpful input on the specific history & place of the workshop which might help structure the drifting section..*

-Tim

### **Abstract**

*In this workshop, participants will join members of the Counter-Cartographies Collective (3Cs) in counter-mapping “loss in the anthropocene” through a critical engagement with Pittsburgh’s built and natural environments.*

*We will begin with an immersive experience through the city that attends to historical loss and contemporary displacement, while also locating the climate crisis in everyday urban spaces and imagining alternative climate futures. We will then gather to learn about counter-mapping and to think together about ways that counter-mapping — as a critical and embodied practice — can help us to better understand our personal experiences of global processes and to generate new ways of engaging with the climate crisis.*

*Finally, we will collectively create a counter-map of the University and city of Pittsburgh by applying tools and principles of counter-mapping to our earlier itineraries and our previous experiences of these spaces. Participants will leave the workshop prepared to interrogate their relationships with other built and natural landscapes, to locate the climate crisis in other places they inhabit, and to anticipate and imagine environmental loss and change in other locations important to them.*

### **Purpose**

- *Introduce concepts of counter-mapping and build excitement about mapping as a creative/generative tool and not just an analytical/quantitative one*
- *Giving participants mapmaking tools to interrogate their own personal experience and other spaces*
- *Guide participants to broaden/complexify their understanding of multiple layers of climate change and the anthropocene*
- *Contextualize the current loss that faces humanity with past loss; vision for the future*

### **Outcomes**

- *Group-generated large-format counter-map quilt of Pitt campus & climate change*

### **Draft agenda - 3:30 - 7:30 PM**

#### **3:30 - Gathering**

*Gather (either outside in a designated meeting place or in the library) & do quick opening activity.*

#### **3:45 - 4:30 - Drifting through the Anthropocene**

Divide into groups of 3-4 and do a directed drift through the area around the workshop grounds. Each member of the group is given a different drift prompt to pay attention to a particular layer of climate change & the anthropocene (past, present & future). Groups are also given historical basemaps (possibly redlining?) to refer to in the drift, to situate themselves in layers of the past. Drifts end back at the (indoor) meeting space. If there's inclement weather, propose drifting indoors, or through riding a bus line. May need to tweak prompts to focus on things which can be done indoors/on a bus.

Sample prompts might include:

- What forms of life do you see in these spaces? What used to be in these spaces?
- What signs of the past are visible? How have you witnessed these spaces change?
- Where is displacement taking place today? What forces are driving it?
- Stop midway through the drift and read/conduct an acknowledgement of indigeneous land loss; notice how you are relating to the land and the history of people who have been on it?
- How would you describe your itinerary through the city? How does it compare with your typical itineraries through Pittsburgh?
- Where do you see carbon emissions happening?
- Where do you see corporations which profit off of climate change?
- How could these spaces be changed in the future?
- How might the urban landscapes of Pittsburgh be different if we were taking climate change seriously?
- What sounds do you hear? Which of them are human-created?

#### **4:45 - 5:00 PM - Debrief**

Debrief conversation, facilitators scribe ideas on flipchart paper around the room so that group has them for reference later.

#### **5:00 PM - 5:10 PM - Break?**

Depending on when dinner is this could be a time to get food, otherwise dinner could be part of the group work time.

#### **5:10 PM - 6:00 PM - Counter-mapping introduction / presentation**

3Cs shares an intro to counter-mapping concepts, including some special focus on the ways that counter-mapping and critical GIS have engaged with climate change. Part of this could happen via a gallery walk where we put up different maps around the space and folks look at them in groups.

#### **6:00 PM - 6:45 PM - Dinner & counter-mapping Pitt!**

Regroup in original groups and work on paper maps reflecting on the themes that came up in the drift, using big paper printouts of the basemap of the area, other supplies.

#### **6:45 PM - 7:15 PM - Shareback**

Groups present-back via a gallery walk, and then debrief/discuss

#### **7:15 PM - 7:30 PM - Closing**

*Briefly highlight some next steps/methods. What other competencies/technologies could folks develop to take this further? Announce remaining workshops in series. Close out the space.*

---

Saturday 11 January 2020 Michael writes:

*First, as for the abstract -- we really like it, but we'd like to double down on the environmental focus during the 'drifting' phase. Two reasons for that: it better fits the loss in the anthropocene theme, and it's better suited to where we're located. Given the short time frame for the drift, students won't be able to get to anyplace where gentrification and displacement processes will be easily legible. But, on campus, there is plenty of nearby access to parks and open space that encourage consideration of what the campus might have been like before.*

*Related: we're kind of imagining doubling down as well on the idea of loss of non-human elements of prior ecosystems as well as prior human uses of the spaces -- so what is the "natural" terrain like now and then, and what were the other, earlier modes of human-non-human imagining of the space?*

*Also related: we're going to try to outfit the room with lots of relevant materials and objects, in case an indoor "drift" is required by the weather. Who knows: today it's 70, it was 19 a couple of nights ago...*

*Ruth is going to forward along some links to really cool maps that are publicly available online that might help you imagine more specifically where we are in the city and how the changes have looked over time. This should help with refining the prompts also.*

*Next: I am going to send a separate email linking you both to Josephine, in my office, who will contact you soon about travel arrangements, etc.*

*Finally: contract: I will send yet one more email connecting you to Veronica Dristas (Nathan, you will remember Veronica) who can advise on the contract. It is sometimes hard for us to get you set up as an outside vendor and to get a contract signed in an expeditious way, but Veronica will advise on all of that.*

Saturday 11 January 2020, Michael to the 3Cs

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Sunday 12 January 2020 Ruth writes

*The thing I was talking about with Michael on Friday is this collection of georeferenced Pittsburgh historical maps in an ArcGIS Online interface, which is a really great tool for exploring how any particular place in the city has been transformed over time. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=63f24d1466f24695bf9dfc5bf6828126>. I have spent endless hours on this site!*

*Many more maps, which have not been georeferenced, are available on this site: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/pittsburgh-maps>. There's so much to see and to extrapolate about past land use and past environments from all of these!*

*The same site has links to many other collections, some of which would be great for thinking about the environment and environmental change, like photographs of Pittsburgh's industrial past: <https://historicpittsburgh.org/collections/A%2A>.*

*Very much looking forward to next steps,*

Friday 17 January 2020 Michael replies

*yeah. Promising*

Sunday 19 January 2020 Michael writes to the 3Cs guys (and Ruth):

*just an update: Ruth and I met with some of the other folks for the second workshops, and had a further think about all of this. We've come up with the following idea, which we hope you'll like and can integrate into your plans.*

*For the "drifting" period, we're going to extend to 1 hour, and have three "stations" that each participant will rotate through: 1) special collections at the library, which is going to have some carefully selected "stuff" out for us 2) an outdoor stop in nearby Panther Hollow, which will get the participants at least a toe into "nature" without going far off campus, and 3) an indoor station set up in our meeting room, which will have other artifacts for students to drift through. Ruth and I, and Susan (a post-doc in the World History Center), will serve as docents to take the students around to these three stations and keep them on time and on task. We'll all convene in the main room after an hour to commence on your part of the workshop.*

*We thought this would give us a bit more uniformity in the drifting process while also giving students a variety of prompts; it also provides a built-in hedge against bad weather (as we can do two groups and longer stops at the indoor stations if it is impossible to be outside). From there, we can continue along the lines you both sketched earlier, which we really like.*

*How does that sound?*

Monday 20 January 2020 Tim responds:

*Hi Michael! Just chatting with Nathan about this; do you have more information on what sort of content will be included in the drifting stops? Or what sorts of prompts we might give to the drifting groups?*

*We're trying to envision how participants will be able to gather/experience spatial data for mapping from engaging with artifacts; but it sounds like you and Ruth might have already some ideas of what that looks like, curious to hear..*

*Also just a note that both of us have found that students drifting in groups tends to go best when there are clear instructions but not necessarily hands-on guidance through the process; it's helpful to leave a bit of room for groups to have to ask themselves "what's going on here?" and then come up with creative answers that can feed into the counter-mapping.*

[Later that day Michael replies]:

*yes, the docents will mainly be conducting the groups from place to place to keep things on time. I'll let Ruth answer the question about what will be at each station, but it includes various historical maps, stuff from the Audobon collection here, etc. The outdoor stop is on Panther Hollow, just adjacent to campus, where students will get to think about what our immediate area might have looked like prior to human settlement.*

*Ruth, can you elaborate?*

Saturday 25 January 2020 Ruth replies

*Thanks for your patience with my delay in responding. We have not yet finalized the collections that will be available at each station – we'll be working with the librarians and curators to finalize that over the next two weeks.*

*In the station in the university library (Hillman, which is right next door to Posvar, the building where the workshop will be based), we'll have some materials from Pitt special collections: historical maps for sure, historical photographs of Pittsburgh from its industrial heyday, natural history drawings (Michael alluded to Audubon – Pitt owns a complete set of the original bird paintings) – basically a range of things that can help students think about Pittsburgh as a place with both a spatial existence and collection of complex environmental pasts and presents.*

*In the station in the room where we'll hold the workshop, we're hoping to have some museum artifacts – things that the Carnegie Natural History Museum, which is just across a plaza from the building in question, considers acceptable and easy to move. We're working with the curator of the Anthropocene, and what I'm most hoping she'll bring is their paired sets of pressed flora. They have plants that were pressed and preserved a hundred years ago, with exact dates and locations noted, and in the last few years they're collected specimens of the same plants from the same locations on the same dates, and it's really vivid to see that things that were in tight bud a hundred years ago are now in full flower on the same dates.*

*The third station will be the edge of Schenley Park, which we can get to in a five minute walk from Posvar. We'll ask workshop participants to drift – we love that word – in the park and observe and photograph whatever strikes their fancy. Pittsburgh's weather is unpredictable, so it could be an ice storm or a balmy day. We'll encourage people to go outdoors no matter what, but if the weather is really impossible, we'll cancel the park walking.*

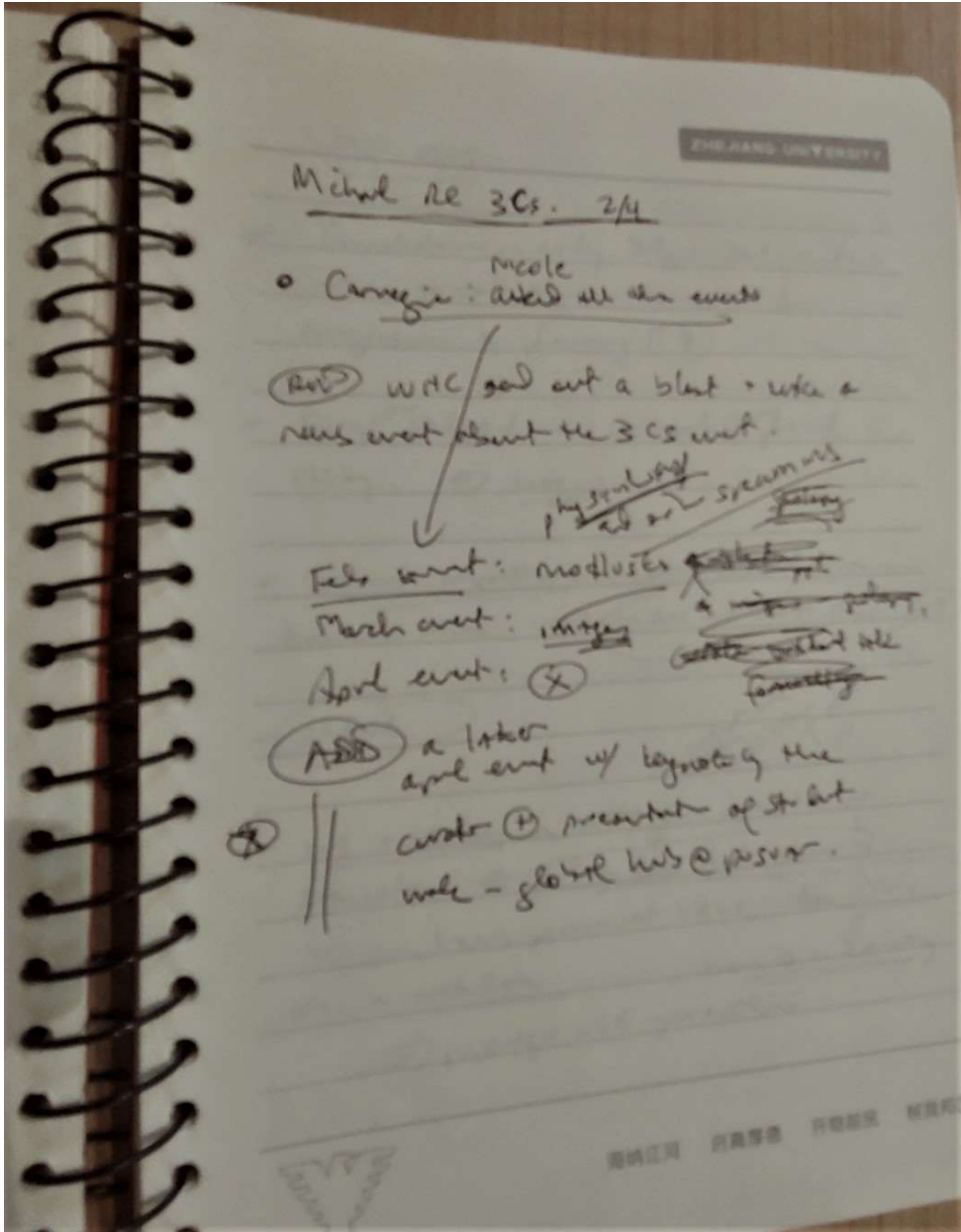
*Is this enough information? Would you like us to try to firm up a more precise list of artifacts and materials this week, or is this enough for you to go on?*

Thursday 30 January 2020 Tim replies:

*Hi Ruth! Thx, this is definitely enough detail, and I think it'll be fun to work with so much material! I know we still have some questions about how to best prompt the students during that part of the workshop to make sure that they're experiencing/witnessing/gathering geographic "data" which can be fodder for mapping later on in the evening, but we can chat some more about that when all of us talk.*

*I'm pretty flexible next Tuesday and Friday, do the rest of y'all have availability then?*





[a whole slew of emails follows, trying to schedule a meeting, including one where Michael gets double-booked and apologies, and Ruth commiserates, stating that she often gets double-booked and knows the feeling. Eventually the meeting is set. Total 69 emails in the thread].

Tuesday 4 February 2020 Michael to Ruth

*we're supposed to chat at noon about mapping. Could we make it a call instead. My later meeting was cancelled, and doing a call would save me a trip to campus...*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*Yes, sure thing. I'll call you then.*

Wednesday 5 February 2020, a message goes out to our networks:

### ***Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene Workshop Series***

*Maps are compelling forms for imaging and to imagining the physical, temporal, cultural, and political worlds we inhabit. Maps can be used to orient, re-orient, and dis-orient; some maps – intentionally or not – do all at once. The Global Studies Center (GSC) and the World History Center (WHC) are offering a series of hands-on mapping workshops that provoke participants to learn how to practice different ways of communicating using maps while also thinking about how to depict environmental transformation in Pittsburgh as we enter the Anthropocene: an Epoch of Loss.*

*All Workshops will happen 3-7 PM in 4130 Posvar Hall:*

*\*February 17 -- COUNTERMAPPING*

*\*March 16 -- GEOSPATIAL MAPPING*

*\*April 6 -- MAPS AS ART*

*Visit the following website for workshop descriptions: <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/global/mapping-loss-anthropocene-0>*

Tuesday 4 February 2020 we get this note from one of our colleagues / collaborators in the Mapping workshop

*We were discussing what material to display on Feb. 17, and the idea circulated that it may be cool to show maps/images of the places which the participants will go to before they stop by at the library. So, the question is, do you have any clarity as to exactly what spots you are taking the participants? Also, since our exhibits must stay in the library, I should probably plan to meet you at the Hillman entrance and take you to the Archives display room – has there any approximate timeline been worked out?*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

*Thanks for this. According to the most recent version of the agenda that I have, participants will gather in Posvar from 3:45 to 4:30 for an opening activity and orientation. Then, they'll break*

**Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene**  
Workshop Series Exploring Our Connection to Climate-Related Upheavals  
Create Digital & Analog Maps

**Countermapping** - February 17, 3-7 PM, 4130 Posvar Hall  
Guided by the 3Cs Counter-Cartography Collective, participants will "drift" through Pitt Library collections of maps and photographs, Carnegie Natural History Museum artifacts and edge of Schenley Park while thinking about environmental change in Pittsburgh, and will then make critical and personal maps that reflect the experience of environmental change.

**Geospatial Mapping** - March 16, 3-7 PM, 4130 Posvar Hall  
Participants will use their phones to take GPS tracks at the edge of Schenley Park, which they will integrate with digitized maps and photographs from the Pitt collection and turn into interactive digital map narratives using the ArcGIS StoryMaps or HistoryPin platform.

**Maps as Art** - April 6, 3-7 PM, 4130 Posvar Hall  
Artists will demonstrate how to use found and recycled materials to make speculative and renderings of landscapes that are spatially aware while also being aesthetically pleasing and imaginative.

Participation in the full series is encouraged, but not required.  
Register at [forms.gle/zZyEsmYQkPDgjxt56](https://forms.gle/zZyEsmYQkPDgjxt56)

Pitt Global  
Pitt World History Center  
PITT CREATES  
YEAR OF CREATIVITY

*into three groups to “drift” through three sites from 3:45 to 4:30. The sites will be the library, the room in Posvar (where we’ll have specimens from Carnegie library of species that once inhabited this place), and the edge of Schenley Park. Then there will be a debrief and a break back in Posvar (you and the rest of the library participants are welcome to join us at that point for food around 5:00 and to join as much of the rest of the evening as you wish). Then there will be a countermapping introduction and presentation, work on paper maps, and a shareback, concluding around 7:30.*

*So – all that is to say that the library part will last from 3:45 to 4:30, and will consist of three separate small groups coming and going. Just in case, maybe assume that it will run a bit late and last till 4:45. I think that if you or someone can meet each group at the Hillman entrance and escort them in and out of the Archives display room (where is that?), that would be perfect.*

*Do you have any update about what materials you’re planning to have on display? Do you need more guidance from us about what you might include? As for where they will go on the outside part of the “drifting,” since they will have only 15 minutes, they will not be able to stray very far. I am thinking that we can walk past Frick Fine Arts and look down at Panther Hollow, and maybe walk down the stairs that start behind Frick Fine Arts and lead into the ravine itself. So – the old Forbes Field, Phipps, Panther Hollow, maybe toward the old J & L site at the foot of Bates Street.*

*Many thanks for your participation in this event!*

*PS – I think I offset all the times by a half hour. We go from 3 to 7, not 3:30 to 7:30 – so the “drifting” part where participants go to the library will be 3:15 to 4:00, not 3:45 to 4:30. Sorry for confusion –*

[Later that day our collaborator writes back sharing a note from his colleague:

*Thanks for getting a list of the sites they plan to visit. Here are some items that I know I will want to pull for their visit:*

*--Map of Oakland from 1860s showing the area this is today Cathedral, Hillman Lib, Panther Hollow*

*--I will pull some Hopkins and perhaps a Sanborn of Oakland and Hazelwood to show progression over time.*

*--I will look for the Oakland redevelopment plans that were not implemented in the 1950s and 1960s – It will take some hunting, but I’m familiar with these*

*--We’ll pull some photographs from City Photographer and other places showing the Mill sites and street scenes of Oakland*

*There are probably a few other things I can locate, but off the top of my head, these were items that I was thinking about during our meeting the other day. Hope this is helpful.*

Tuesday 11 February 2020 we get this note from the 3Cs regarding the upcoming workshop:

*Pleased to meet you over email and thanks for helping out with the prep for the workshop. Michael said we should be in touch with you about supplies for next Monday's workshop?*

*Here's the supply list Nathan & I have come up with, if this sounds reasonable; we can be flexible too so let us know if anything is particularly difficult to get. Also y'all may have some of this around already.*

- *Tracing paper - thinking we may want this but we're not **positive** we'll use it. If it's possible to get, it would be ideal to get a 19x24 pad of tracing paper.*
- *A wide roll of white butcher paper*
- *Markers, crayons and/or pastels (1 set per group)*
- *Scissors (3-4 pairs, 1 per group)*
- *Gluesticks (3-4, 1 per group)*
- *Tape (3-4 rolls, 1 per group)*

*Also, we wanted to confirm that it would be possible for Nathan & I to print some things on 8.5 x 11 paper earlier in the day on the day of the workshop (maybe there's just a computer lab with a printer we can use?). Let us know, and thanks again!*

[There are 8 more messages in the thread discussing whether we need computers for the participants and whether we need projectors, etc.]

[On another thread, Jason is working with us on the visit of Una Chaudhuri]

Friday 7 February 2020, Jason to Michael and Ruth

*I hope this email finds you well. With Una Chaudhuri's visit to campus less than two months away, I wanted to check in with you about the planned World History Center/Global Studies Center lunch event for her that we've discussed on Friday April 3rd, 11:30am. Any more information you have about it would be useful, but most urgently I wonder if you can tell me if you imagine this event will be open to the public or by invitation only. John Walsh, of the Environmental Humanities Research Seminar, is planning in the next week or so to create some advertising materials for Una's visit, and we're both wondering whether this event can/should be included in that material (it will include her presentation at the Humanities Center on April 2nd).*

*I'm fine with whatever works best for you, so if you'd rather we not advertise the event in this way that's fine, I just wanted to check in with you. If you would like us to include on our advertising materials, please share with me whatever information you can—title of event, confirmed start time and end time, location, etc.*

*Thank you! I'm so glad we're able to collaborate on this event, and I know Una is looking forward to it too.*

[Later that day Michael writes to Ruth]

*I think we open it to the public but have a structured conversation at the beginning before it opens up to general conversation. your thoughts?*

Saturday 8 February 2020 Ruth replies:

*That sounds like a good plan – I agree.*

Sunday 9 February 2020 Michael replies to Jason and Ruth:

*thanks for checking in. Our plan would be to have an event that is open to the public. It will begin with a "structured conversation" in the form of a kind of interview/talk show format, to be opened up to a wider discussion with the audience.*

*I can have my team make a flyer -- can you send me any co-branding information, the bio you are using for her, etc.?*

Monday 10 February 2020 Jason replies:

*Awesome. What shall the Friday event be called? I think I remember that you weren't sure whether to connect it with the "Anthropocene: Era of Loss" project. So if not that, maybe something like "AnthropoScenes and the Stage Lives of Animals: Lunch Event with Una Chaudhuri"? Doesn't really matter to me, but it would be helpful to secure a title to be consistent across all advertisements.*

*The other two major events Una is participating in are:*

*1) presenting the paper "Enduring Performance: AnthropoScenes" with the Environmental Humanities Research Seminar on Wednesday, April 1st at 4:30pm [this paper title might change]*

*2) presenting the paper "Climate Lens Theatre: Human Stories in a 'More-than-Human' Frame" at the Humanities Center Colloquium on Thursday, April 2nd at 12:30pm*

*Prof. Chaudhuri's visit is cosponsored by the Pitt Humanities Center; the departments of Theatre Arts, English, and Art History; the Cultural Studies Program; the Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies Program; the Climate and Global Change Center; and of course the Global Studies Center and the World History Center. I assume I do not need to share with you the Global Studies Center co-sponsorship logo, which should be on the advertising material. :)*

*I haven't yet been asked to write a formal bio for Una, but my instinct is simply to adapt her NYU [faculty bio](#), as per below (I cut one sentence and added a list of her three monographs):*

*Una Chaudhuri is a Collegiate Professor and Professor of English, Drama, and Environmental Studies at New York University. She is currently the Director of NYU's XE: Experimental*

*Humanities & Social Engagement. She has published three books: No Man’s Stage: A Semiotic Study of Jean Genet’s Major Plays (1986); Staging Place: The Geography of Modern Drama (1995); and The Stage Lives of Animals: Zooësis and Performance (2017), along with a number of edited and co-edited collections. Her current research, teaching, and creative projects explore what she calls “ecospheric consciousness”: ideas, feelings, and practices that attend to the multi-species and geo-physical contexts of human lives. Una Chaudhuri is a pioneer in the field of “eco-theatre”—plays and performances that engage with the subjects of ecology and environment—as well as the related field of ecocriticism, which studies art and literature from an ecological perspective. She helped launch both these fields when she guest-edited a special issue of Yale’s Theater journal on “Theatre and Ecology” in 1994. Her introduction to that issue, entitled “‘There must be a lot of fish in that lake’ Theorizing a Theatre Ecology,” is widely credited as a seminal contribution to the field. Professor Chaudhuri was also among the first scholars of drama and theatre to engage with the inter-disciplinary field of Animal Studies. She has written and lectured widely on two concept she has theorized: “zooësis,” the discourse and representation of species in contemporary culture and performance, and “AnthropoScenes,” dramaturgies beyond the human. Professor Chaudhuri participates in collaborative art and research projects, including the on-going multi-platform Dear Climate, which has been featured in exhibitions in Dublin, New York (Storm King Arts Center), New York Public Library, Dumbo Art Festival), the Netherlands, Houston (Rice University).*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*I like the title you’ve suggested – thanks for moving this forward,*

[Later that day Michael replies]

*ditto. Jason, If you have publicity for the other events, we can use the same template.*

[3 more messages are devoted to nailing down the location]

[Here we loop back to another thread, about borrowing artifacts from the Carnegie Museum of Natural History to aid in the mapping workshop. ]

Monday 27 January 2020 from Nicole Heller, Curator of the Anthropocene at CMNH, to her colleagues:

*I wanted to introduce you to Michael Goodhart, political science professor at Pitt and director of Global Studies Center. He and Ruth Mostern (history professor, director of World History Center) are sponsoring a series of workshops called “mapping loss in the anthropocene,” to get students thinking about how to use maps as a tool for learning, processing, grieving transformations in the natural world and our relationship to it. As part of this, they are hosting the first workshop on Monday Feb 16 from 3:30-7:30pm.*

*They are interested in having some "stuff" in the room where the workshop will happen that will put students in mind of the natural environment that exists/existed where Pitt is now located. And they were curious whether the museum might have any artifacts or objects that might fit the bill and might be able to "travel" over to Pitt for an afternoon.*

*Mason - Michael was interested in your herbarium specimens that were collected across 100 years.*

*Albert - I thought you may have some maps of the reconstructed landscape, or other resources, or perhaps even something in relation to the art landscape paintings you studied, that could help create the scene of the natural environment here in the past.*

*Pat – I thought you may have some good ideas about education resources that may be useful for this class. Or other ideas from the collections.*

*Please reach out directly to Michael (cc'ed here) if you have anything that might work as an aid for their workshop, and that you would feel comfortable letting him borrow. Or if you have other ideas and you want to put him touch with those folks. I think I will also send this note generally to senior science.*

[Copious email; much confusion ensues!]

Tuesday 28 January 2020 a colleague replies

*Thanks Nicole. Sounds like a great series. Lending herbarium specimens for something off-site like you describe is challenging for the safety of the specimens, but not out of question. One clear option is to either print out herbarium specimen images or project images on screen. We are currently in the midst of digitization all specimens collected in our region (and actually including many musuems – [mamdigitization.org](http://mamdigitization.org)), and many are already online. You can search the collection here: [midatlanticherbaria.org](http://midatlanticherbaria.org). Go to search>search collections>check Carnegie box only > and search by whatever you'd like.*

*We do have quite a bit of unique specimens collected many decades ago in the area Pat mentioned. At least one of which is now a PA threatened species of concern, of which our collection manager is funded by state for a project to resurvey to see if populations known from herbarium record still exist. (we should actually check out the harmarville site!)*

[same day, another colleague replies]

*I'm putting together a PowerPoint presentation that they can use. It's based on my references and current research about the topic.*

*After an evening of rearranging my PowerPoint slides, I pretty much put together a 45 minute talk that I can present to the Pitt class. THE NATURAL WORLD OF OAKLAND: BEFORE*

*AND AFTER. Topics include, basic geology, landscape formation, archival photographs, and landscape paintings. I can provide a few rock samples. Moreover, the landscape paintings are on display in the Carnegie Museum of Art.*

Wednesday 29 January 2020 Michael to Nicole and colleagues

*WOW, I'm so grateful for your quick and enthusiastic responses! This all seems wonderful to me, and my only concern is how to accommodate all of it within the confines of the workshop being organized by our collaborates at the Counter-Cartography Collective. I[m copying my colleague and co-organizers Ruth Mostern (History) on this email.*

*To summarize :*

*Albert has kindly organized this powerpoint on Oakland...*

*Pat has suggested something about the Pitt/Harmar Marsh property*

*Mason has linked us to the digital repository for specimens and suggested that there might be the possibility of actual specimens.*

*Give us a few days to deliberate and check with the 3Cs team and get back to you. We have two additional workshops in the series, and it might be that some of this might fit well with the others. I'll be in touch again soon, but wanted to thank you all for your contributions and collegiality so far!*

Wednesday 5 February 2020 Michael writes back to everyone again

*thanks again for your generous responses to our requests for help with this. Ruth and I chatted yesterday, and we're both very enthusiastic to find ways to make use of as many of the resources that you've offered as we can. To that end, we've got the following idea, which we hope you'll find amenable.*

*For our Feb. 17 event (see attached flyer for the series), we'd like to stick with artifacts and specimens -- mollusks, and any plant or other specimens that you're willing to bring over to Pitt. This is because we only have **15 minutes** for each group of students to engage with these materials (they will also be at the Pitt special collections archive looking at maps and photos and wandering down into Panther Hollow). We invite any of you to come along to be part of the workshop, and we're happy to set whatever rules you need us to set regarding handling of things, etc.*

*We have two additional workshops scheduled, in March and early April. We were then hoping that, in mid-April, we might hold an event to showcase some of the maps created by workshop*



*participants. At this event, we thought it would be an appropriate kick-off/ keynote if Albert were to present the modified powerpoint (which would really nicely set up the very local maps students will have created), and then we transition into the student work. We're open on the date, and we'd like to use the beautiful new Pitt Global Hub space on the first floor of Posvar Hall for this presentation (it has a huge, wonderful high-res screen, among other benefits). This event would be open to the public, not only to those who took part in the workshops (one other advantage of the hub is that it pulls in passers-by).*

*So that's our plan. Please let me know what you think. I'm also copying Veronica Dristas, Associate Director of the Global Studies Center, who can help us coordinate the arrival of objects, etc.*

*Again, thanks -- we're very excited about this!*

Thursday 6 February 2020 Nicole writes:

*It may have been my bad in not connecting you sooner, I am not sure, but Jen our curator of herps and collection manager Stevie– also have some herps specimens as part of their teaching collection of PA herps that they are willing to lend to this purpose. Please reach out to them directly if you also want to include some herp specimens in the workshop.*

Sunday 9 February 2020 Michael replies

*I think for Feb 16 we're going to go with mullusks, fossil mudstone, and herps (thank you Jennifer and Stevie!). That sounds great, a nice mix.*

*We'd need everything in place by 3pm on Monday the 17th. The room is 4130 Posvar, on the fourth floor, at the Boquest St. end of the hall (on the right). I am cc'ing Veronica Dristas, our Associate Director, who can answer any questions about display, etc. Basically, we'll have tables on which we can lay out the specimens, and we have some tablecloths we can use to make them a bit more appealing.*

Monday 10 February 2020 we get a note from Jen

*I think because we are coming in late to this discussion, we are missing some key details.*

*Can you let us know what kind and how many specimens you would like to have from us? Also, you say that "for Feb 16" you would like herps, but then go on to say that you would like everything in place by 3 pm on Monday the 17th. Can you please clarify when and where you would like these specimens?*

*From our end, we will need to know who is picking up the specimens, and when they intend to return them.*

Tuesday 11 February 2020 Michael replies

*see my previous email. My mistake on the date, it's the 17th, and we start at three, so we'd like to have them in place by then.,*

*We can send people over to pick up the specimens if that's easiest for you, and return them per your instructions. Just let me know when and where to send people (probably some of our grad student interns, joined by one of our staff members). Once I know the time, I can tell you precisely who will come.*

*many thanks for your help with this. It's all coming together slightly last-minute, owing to Ruth and I both being over-taxed, in various ways, this term.*

[Later that day Jen responds]

*Thank you for the clarification on the date. Yes, please send someone to pick up the specimens-- I'll let Stevie reply to you with the date and time you can come by.*

*Can you let us know what kind and how many specimens you would like to have from us, and what the theme should be? I am sure that somewhere in your long email chain there are details, but I scanned the previous 10-15 mails for details of what the goal of the specimens is and don't see it. I apologize if I'm missing something obvious. Can you please let us know in one or two sentences what your goal for these specimens is, so that we can give you appropriate specimens and accompanying text? For example, the title of the email would indicate that maybe you're looking for specimens that have gone extinct in the anthropocene. However, I thought Nicole had mentioned to me you're looking for specimens from Pittsburgh. Any clarification you can provide would be extremely helpful.*

[Later that day, realizing that there are some missing links]

Michael sends a long email to the CMNH herps curators:

*sorry -- I'm wondering if the attachment -- which was attached to my original request to Nicole - has gone missing from your end of the thread? Here's a quick summary:*

*Global Studies and World History Centers at Pitt are jointly sponsoring a series of three mapping workshops over the next three months. This first one is on "counter-mapping," and is organized by the 3Cs (counter-cartography collective) The subject of our counter-mapping exercise is "loss in the Anthropocene," which we'll be critically engaging through interaction with some of Pitt's built and natural environments.*

*Below is a brief overview of the exercise. The specimens are for the "drifting" phase. Subsequent to the draft below, we decided on three "drift locales," one of which is Panther Hollow, one of which is Pitt libraries special collections, which is putting on a display of maps and photos and other images of the Oakland/Pittsburgh region over time. The third one of these "locales" is the room where the specimens will be located. These are really just to spur participants' imaginations, to help them think about nature and change and loss in relation to time and place -*

*- specially, our place, right here on campus. There doesn't need to be any specific theme or unity; locality is really our only/main priority, but we can be flexible about how "local" the specimens are (closer is better, but the rules are soft).*

*As for the number of items -- hard for me to know, given size, ease of transport, etc. Enough to be more than a few; not so many that it takes more than 2-3 people to carry them. Is that useful?*

*Sorry to be vague, but the whole idea is to spur creativity, so we've tried to leave as much open to serendipity as we can, given the need also to populate the room with specimens!*

*Please do reach out if you have other questions. And again, thanks for helping us realize this admittedly somewhat wacky vision!*

*yours,  
Michael*

[the text of the event announcement (included above)] followed]

Friday 14 February 2020 Stevie replies:

*Thank you for the clarifying information. I can pull together perhaps about 10 jars of specimens, ranging from salamanders and frogs to turtles and snakes. Two to three people can easily carry the jars and I should have them ready to go within the hour. Anyone can come by before 3 pm today (not between 12-1 though) and any time on Monday. Is one time preferable over the other?*

[from here, it comes down to a few more emails about which door to meet them at and at what time – 34 total emails in this thread]

[a separate thread (19 messages) dealt with mollusks: highlights follow]

Thursday 30 January 2020 from Nicole to Michael and Ruth

*Tim, our curator of mollusks, also kindly responded to my inquiry. He has local mussel and snail specimens he can share if it is helpful and working with your developing workshop plans.*

*Perhaps from Tim's collections there are some large species or dramatic-looking species that used to be locally abundant but are no longer found, that would be illustrative for students.*

----- Forwarded message -----

*There were tons of land snails of dozens of species where Pitt is now and although most are small, some are large enough that they could be used in such a display. Furthermore, in the nearby rivers were freshwater mussels, dozens of species, and they would be good for a display, if river habitats are "close enough" to Pitt to count. Yes, I have specimens of snails and clams that I would be happy to loan for this workshop.*

*Let me know the next step.  
Thank you for facilitating this opportunity.*

[Later that day Michael replies]

*I would love to visit with some Mollusks -- thanks! Ruth and I are meeting next week, and we'll get back to you all soon with something like a comprehensive response to this array of generous offers.*

[Later that day Ruth replies]

*Yes – same – I am definitely enthusiastic about bringing some mollusks into the room!*

[after a few logistics emails, the thread picks up on Thursday 14 February:]

*Yes, I will be in the museum Monday, although busy from 9:30-10, and 1-2. Yes, you could come to the museum to pick up specimens. Once you are in the museum building, have the attendant call me and I will escort you to mollusks. If you can give me an idea when you might be here, I can be sure to be ready.*

*I have some questions about the mollusks you wish to borrow. How “secure” would they be? For example, would they be in a case protected from handling, or do you envision that people will be handling the specimens? The answer will influence which specimens I loan you. Also, about how many of each kind of mollusk would you like?*

*I could assemble some possibilities and you could select from among them, or if you are short on time, I could choose some and have them ready to go (there will be a tiny bit of loan paperwork).*

*Looking forward to seeing you on Monday.*

[additional emails on logistics follow, including where to locate the mollusks collection inside the CMNH. On Monday 17 February we “meet” our mollusks:]

*Here is my brief attempt at names and stories*

*Neohelix albolabris (Whitelip Snail)*

*Largest native land snail in Pennsylvania. Still relatively common in forests outside the city, but evidently, they no longer live within the city.*

*Potamilus alatus (Pink Heelsplitter)*

*Potamilus alatus is just one of dozens of species of freshwater mussels that live (or lived) in the rivers of our area. As the river pollution got cleaned up, many of the clam species have returned. The colorful nacre (mother-of-pearl) layer on the inside of the shell is the same material pearls are made of.*

*Campeloma decisum (Pointed Campeloma)*

*These snails occur in the larger rivers in our area. In all but the southernmost part of the USA, all Campeloma decisum are female. They reproduce by parthenogenesis. While most snails lay eggs, the eggs of Campeloma decisum develop inside the mother until they emerge as crawl-*

*away babies. They can live more than 10-years and, similar to tree rings, the dark lines on the shell indicate winters.*

[Back to the main plot]

Sunday 9 February 2019 Ruth writes to Michael summarizing where things stand:

*Nathan and Tim, it was good talking to you on Friday. I think everything is coming into place for a fantastic workshop in a week. As promised, I'm cc'ing you directly into conversation with Boris Michev, our Maps and GIS librarian, and with David Grinnell from Special Collections.*

*Boris and David: Nathan and Tim were suggesting that it would be good to have large-format paper copies in the workshop room in Posvar of some of the historical maps that the students will have seen the originals of in Hillman. This might be large copies (could be tiled) that groups of students can draw on directly, or it might be projections onto a wall of the room, covered with butcher paper, that would allow them to draw. We were also wondering whether you might be able to pull a hydrology map, focused on Oakland and environs, in addition to the other maps you listed.*

*I think that is the only substantive question that came out of our conversation. I really like the idea of prompting students to think in layers, each with its own historical time frame, focusing on water and its history, the human streetscape, and the species with whom humans share this space (we'll have specimens from the mollusk collection and the herpetology collection from Carnegie Museum in the workshop room to inspire use, as well as fossilized mudrock).*

*Nathan and Tim, I understand that you'll send us a materials list by the middle of the week, and also that we can plan to meet up early in the day on the 17<sup>th</sup> to scope out spaces, make introductions, and set up. I teach from 11 to 12 that day, and I have office hours (though they are fairly fungible) from 1 to 3, but I am otherwise at your disposal.*

*I will be traveling in the UK from tomorrow through Saturday. I expect to be watching email closely, but not during eastern timezone hours.*

*Very much looking forward to this,*

Thursday 14 February 2020 we get some links to library materials for the “drifting” session:

*Below are links to digital versions maps and atlas that I have pulled for Monday.*

*Plan of lots on Smithfield Farm, Pitt Township, on Pennsylvania Avenue, c 1860*

<https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt:31735064533353>

[\*Pittsburgh, Allegheny City & Adjoining Boroughs, 1872\*](#)

*Plates 14, 22, 23*

[Pittsburgh, Volume 1 \(East End, Wards 13-14, 22-23\), 1898](#)

Plates 8, 16, 24-27

[Pittsburgh, Volume 1 \(Wards 13-14, 22-23\), 1904](#)

Plates 16-28

[Pittsburgh, Volume 2 \(Wards 1-6, 9\), 1914](#)

Plates 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24

[Pittsburgh, Volume 1 \(Wards 1-6, 9\), 1923](#)

Plates 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24

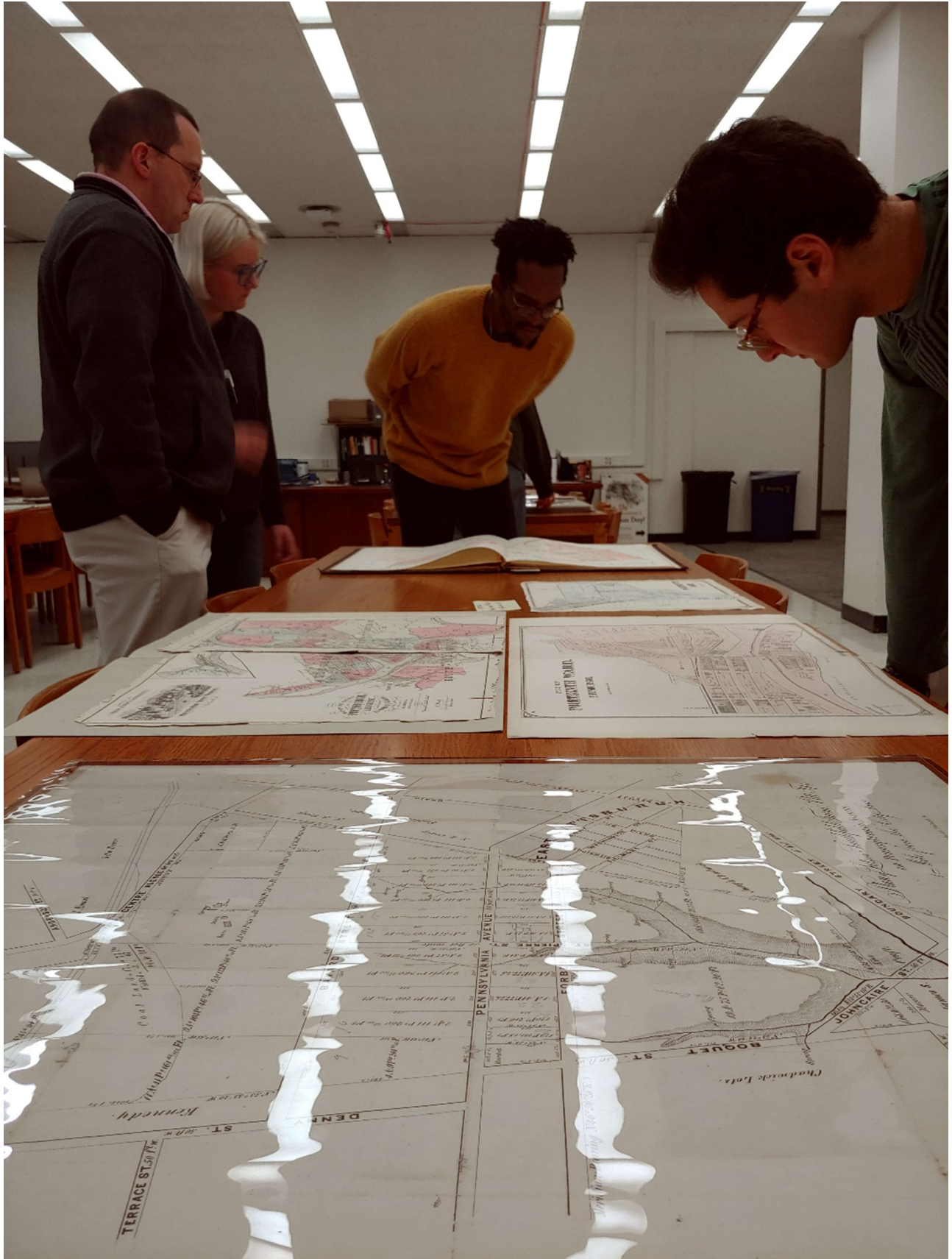
[Pittsburgh, Volume 2 \(Wards 7, 14-15\), 1939](#)

Plates 17, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28-32

[23 total messages in this thread, most of which are about what time who will meet whom where, etc.]

[17 February 2020](#) – Counter-mapping with the 3Cs!











Tuesday 3 March 2020. We were still assuming that things were going forward. Ruth writes to colleagues involved in the second mapping event:

*I'm getting in touch about the next Mapping the Epoch of Loss event, which is scheduled for Monday, March 16, just after spring break. We have a general plan for the event – for participants to spend some time in Schenley Park taking pictures and GPS tracks, and then to work with digitized material from Historic Pittsburgh as well as what they have collected in order to create HistoryPin or StoryMap projects on the spot. Susan Grunewald and Boris Michev are leading the tool teaching part of the event. My understanding is that the library can provide handheld GPS devices. This leaves us with a general framework, but still, I think, some tasks to do. As I see it:*

*--Republicize the event through Global Studies and World History Center. I think we should expect some no-shows, given our experience with 3Cs, and especially with this being right after spring break. Maybe we should allow 20 or 25 people to register in light of that? Presumably we should ask people to bring their own computers and also to be sure to have a phone to take pictures.*

*--Come up with an exact schedule for the workshop and ensure that there are people to lead all the aspects of it and that we have the right material and websites and everything cued up.*

*--Get clear about the objective for what we want them to produce in their projects. We want to teach them the tools, but I think we also want to set a goal – for them to represent changing landscapes in Oakland between those depicted on historical maps and in historical photos, and those they see in front of them on their walk.*

*--Do we want to involve Carnegie Museum again? And/or the material from Special Collections?*

*--Do we have a Plan B if the weather that day is impossible for being outside?*

*My week is looking pretty crowded, but I am happy to meet. Friday before 11 is the best time for me, and I could if need be also meet 1-3 on Friday or on Thursday before 10, and I'm willing to make time during spring break as well. But perhaps we can handle this by email?*

[A few logistics emails follow]

Wednesday 4 March 2020 Michael writes:

*GSC is sending reminders to folks about this, and we'll also make sure that we expand the sign-up list to allow for attrition. I have limited times to meet (and Ruth, I thought you and I had a meeting at 2pm at the Carnegie Cafe with Katy about Workshop 3).*

*As for the workshop logistics: I don't think we need to deal with the artifacts, etc., again (it's a lot of logistics to get them here and back). The key is getting outside and making sure*

*participants have what we need to play with the tools. I can bring the map we made last time, and we can hang it on the walls, to ensure some continuity.*

*Plan B for weather? I don't have a great one...*

*I'm happy with whatever schedule works for those presenting.*

[Later that day Ruth replies to Michael]

*Yes, right, March 6 (Friday) at 2 with Katy. I panicked for a minute and thought it was today – but it's Friday, right?*

*I think we can handle the logistics by email without meeting in person...*

[Later that day Susan replies to the main thread]

*Ruth and I had a quick meeting about the second workshop tagged on with something else today. Here is the plan that we have come up with:*

*3:00 Ruth and Michael do introductions*

*3:15-3:45 Susan and Boris discuss curriculum (map local environmental past - present - future) and discuss GPS (either with phone or trackers) **Boris**, can you bring over a few of the GPS tracking devices from the library as a backup in case I can't find good solutions for having participants do it on their phones?*

*3:45-4:00 - look at historical Pittsburgh online (maps and images, Susan finds some photos from the website, **Boris** can you ask your library colleagues at special collections if they can recommend some good photos of Pitt/Oakland/Schenley Park? Maybe there is something from the Datathon?)*

*4:00-4:45 - out and about, GPS tracks and photos of current PGH/Pitt/Schenley (plan B look out from 36th floor of Cathy)*

*5:00-5:30 reassemble and eat*

*5:30-6:00 - Susan and Boris give Story Map introduction*

*6:00-6:45 (ish) work on Story Map projects*

*6:45-7:00 Share Story Maps*

***Veronica**, when you send out a reminder for the event, please tell all participants to bring a computer and a smart phone and to wear shoes appropriate for a walk in the park. You can also let them know that we have a backup location in case of rain but that it will require walking from Posvar to the Cathedral of Learning.*

[a few more emails in the thread about how to time the food.]

[That reference to the meeting with Katy refers to a separate thread about the 3<sup>rd</sup> event in the series, with artist and “paper lady” [Katy DeMent](#)]

Monday 3 February 2020 Ruth wrote:

*It was good to meet you at the CMU sponsored event at Construction Junction a couple of months ago. I loved doing the mapmaking and I've told many people how inspiring it was. It's been great following you on social media since then and interacting a bit that way.*

*When we met, I think I told you that I have been planning a series of mapmaking workshops here at Pitt, funded by a Year of Creativity grant from the Provost's office. That is now taking shape, and you can find more information here: <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/global/mapping-loss-anthropocene-0>. You'll see that we have sketched in a “Maps as Art” workshop on April 6 with a very generic description. What we are really hoping is that you would be able to lead that event, if your schedule is free on that day. If you are potentially interested, maybe we can meet some time to talk about fees, logistics, and how this might fit into the rest of our activities? We would also be delighted to invite you to participate in the earlier two workshops, if you are interested.*

*I am cc'ing Michael Goodhart, the director of the Pitt Global Studies Center, with whom I am co-organizing this event.*

*With many thanks for your potential interest in this,*

Friday 7 February 2020 Ruth writes, forwarding from Katy

*Great news:*

*----- Forwarded message -----*

*Happy Snow day Ruth , I would love to facilitate "Maps as Art" with you and your students on **APRIL 6**, th remarkable. my Mondays are open in April!*

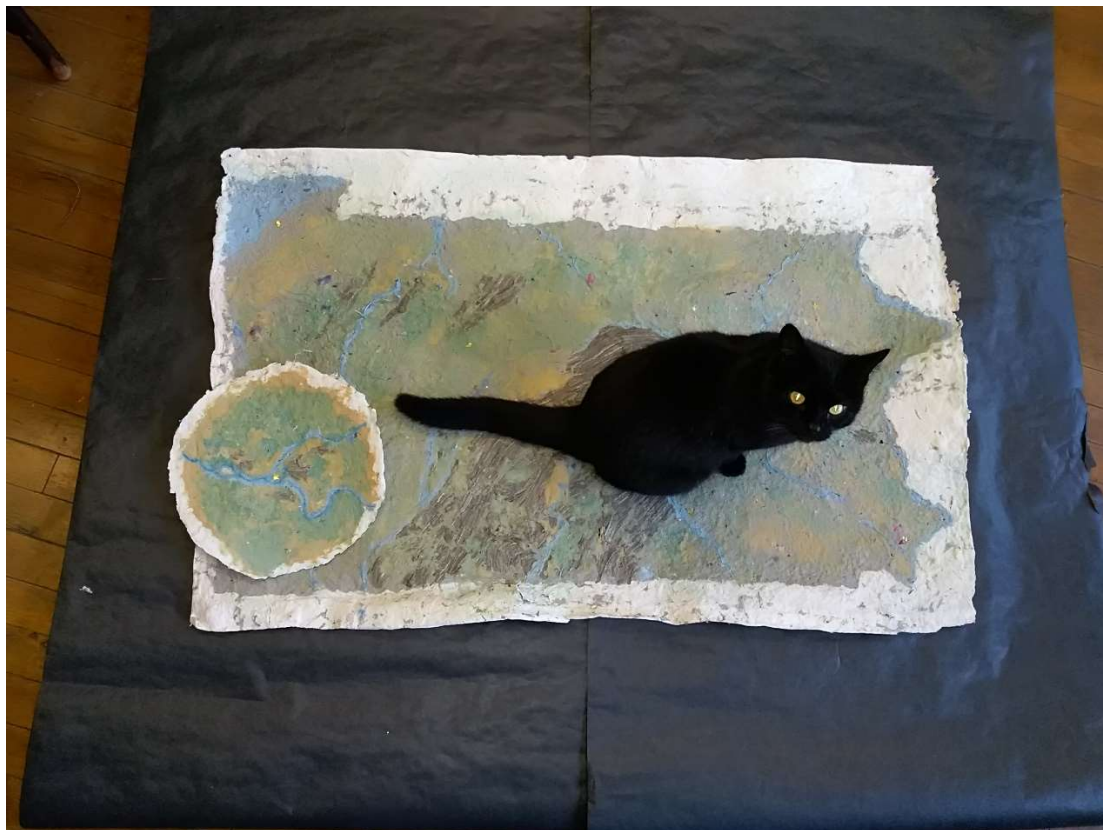
*I have a short power point on this topic in the works of coarse hands on elements with time, space, number of participants, and relevance similar to what you experienced. My guess is a world map may have more relevance for these students but you direct this how you see.(see image of painted world maps with 4 th graders, as well as the finished Pittsburgh Water shed map you worked on,below)*

*I to have been tracking you progress on this project and have March 16th on my calendar already so would love to join in - do i need to register some where?*

*I will miss the February program as i will be on my way to Sri Lanka through March 1st.*

*We can meet here in the digital world, chat on the old school phone 404-983-3406( self imposed snow day so in office/ studio all day Friday, today) or in person upon my return.*

*Thank you for including me in this important work.*



Saturday 8 February 2020 Ruth replies:

Thank you so much for your note – I am thrilled that you are interested in doing this The registration for the March 16 event is [here](#).

I think that after March 1 will not be too late if we want to meet in person. Shall we find a time? I have pretty good availability the week of March 2-6. The Thursday or Friday of that week are almost totally free except for 12-2 events both days. I'm happy to meet on campus or elsewhere at your convenience. The following week, March 9-13 is Pitt spring break. I'm out of town Monday and Tuesday, but I'm very flexible the rest of the week. I'm sure Michael will want to join us as well.

I could see doing a world map or a Pittsburgh map – our two other workshops are focused on local landscapes, and they will involve opportunities for participants to get outside for a little while to look around at the edge of Panther Hollow next to Posvar Hall where we'll be meeting, and to look at historic maps and photos from the Pitt library collection and at specimens of local species from the Carnegie Museum collection – we're combining map making with some immersive seeing. Your workshop could be different from that, or it could continue in that vein.

Very much looking forward to this,

[Later that day, Katy replies]

Could we meet on Friday March 6th? earlier in the day is best for me

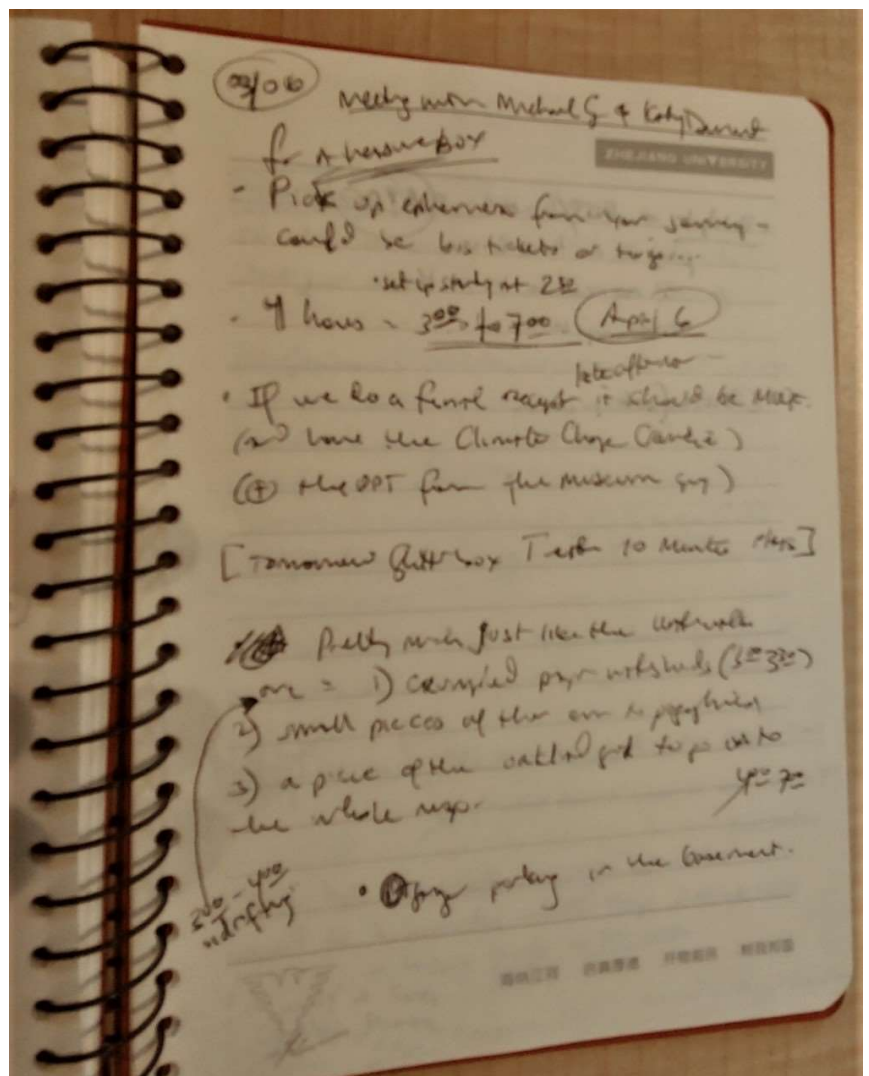
...

The hand made paper mapping would fit in nicely with deep seeing of local landscapes .

Physical and representational mapping . like I said i already have a short PP about art maps- then we can do hand on focused on what you decide =on the 6th.how long would the program be .

When registering it implied that i must be a student, is that so? C4C was interested in posting this event as well, unfortunately not if the registration is limited to students . naturally,

[9 emails follow nailing down the time and place of the meeting]



Wednesday 11 March 2020 is the day Pitt formally announces the cancellation of classes for a week following Spring Break and a remote finish to the term. The new reality is becoming clear to us. Ruth writes;

*I'm just sending out an initial note about what we should do with our workshop on the 16<sup>th</sup> if in-person instruction is cancelled. I assume that we will not hold the workshop in that case?*

*There's probably no need for further discussion at this point – just so long as we have a plan ready if the cancellation comes to pass.*

[this forwards a long chain of “global crisis” emails from deans, chairs, etc. Michael replies:]

*I've been assuming that Pitt will cancel classes for the remainder of the term, sometime tomorrow or Friday. I suppose we could do this remotely, minus the geo-tagging part, but people could tag where they are, if we can get online instruction. The rest could I suppose be done by zoom.*

[Later in the day Boris replies]

*So, I guess we are not doing this thing – at least not on the 16<sup>th</sup>, if break is extended until the 23<sup>rd</sup>. I personally, am somewhat disinclined to try to do it remotely in the near future. What is the deadline for spending the grant \$\$? Can we postpone it until later in the year?*

[Later in the day Michael replies]

*the cancellation of classes next week makes everything even dumber than it was going to be. I think we just have to postpone until Fall and hope that we can keep the grant money. It's a shame, but I don't see how we proceed on the 16th in light of this directive.*

[Later in the day Ruth replies]

*I agree*

[Meanwhile, on another channel]

11 March 2020 Michael to Ruth

*We should think a little about what to do about Katy if Pitt closes. I realize she is preparing now, for April 6, and that she's held the day for us. I say we pay her the full amount. But maybe since the later event is not yet scheduled, and since she's preparing something that is relatively easier (she's done the crankie things before, yes, it's already ready), we hold off on that one? Or something? Thoughts?*

[Later in the day Ruth replies]

*OKAY- WE'RE CANCELLED – the rest of the note is something I wrote before the news dropped – now lightly edited.*

*Let's let her know that we'll put off the workshop until the fall (??) and that she should not put in any prep time now or spend any money. I'm happy to pay her something now to hold a date for the fall, or we can pay her then.*

*I suggest that we contact the Year of Creativity folks in the Provost's office and inform them that we plan to postpone our second two workshops until the fall and that we make sure that the funds roll over and that we can wait on any reporting about the event until fall. (I'll also work with DSDS about rollover for WHC funds, and presumably you'll have a process for UCIS).*

*Whew, a whole process coming up.*

*And yes, I'm feeling very bleak about many things, though I had a really inspiring trip to DC to make the case for the humanities, supported by a very creative and practical organization, so I'm still floating on some of those good vibes.*

[Later in the day Ruth wrote]

*I was thinking about you as I wrote this note to my students – what with the epoch of loss theme...*



Online Learning for HIST705 and 706

Ruth Mostern

All Sections

Mar 11 at 4:01pm

Greetings HIST705/6 Students,

By now you have presumably learned that Pitt is replacing in-person instruction with online and alternative learning options for the remainder of the semester, and that the start of classes after spring break will be postponed until Monday, March 23. I have not yet developed a complete plan about how the rest of the semester will go, but I want to start with a few ideas and invite all of you to contact me with questions and concerns.

1. I am aspiring to be kind, patient, and pragmatic. This semester will not be concluding in the way that any of us had anticipated, and I want to be sure that the resulting uncertainty and lack of clarity does not add to the stress and anxiety that many of you are surely feeling right now.
2. In recognition of the fact that bandwidth may be limited, both on campus and wherever you are situated, I am not planning to require remote attendance at lectures during a synchronous scheduled time. I may record lectures on Panopto (available through Canvas) for you to watch and respond to in some way, or I may write prompts about the readings and ask you to respond to them by text or video. I have not decided yet. In any case, I will make sure that the lecture-replacement part of the course does not require more than 100 minutes/week of your time.
3. I will be working with your TA's to develop a plan for recitation sections. These may or may not be held as group sessions on Zoom, and it may be that you will deliver your recitation presentations via Zoom to your whole section, or that you will deliver them to your TA's alone. I will let you know as soon as possible.
4. Since the resumption of the semester is delayed by a week, your final paper due date will also be delayed by a week, to April 2. If you were anticipating using library books that are no longer accessible to you and you need to change your topic as a result, let me know.
5. I will stay in touch as I learn more and as I make more decisions. For now, I want to be sure that this class is not among the things you're worrying about.

If this situation raises issues that might interfere with your learning this semester - such as internet or housing access, health challenges, access to course materials, or anything else, please let me know (but do not feel compelled to share details that you would prefer to keep private). Although many matters are beyond my ability to solve, I will be happy to work with you on deadlines and other workarounds that will permit you to complete the semester.

I hope that some of the content we have studied this semester - from past epidemics, to the concept of social collapse, to the uses of rage and hope about environmental catastrophe - will help you to navigate the turbulent times ahead. I look forward to seeing you all in my inbox and on my monitor during the remainder of the semester.

In solidarity and anticipation,

Ruth

[Later in the day Michael replied]

*Yeah, and Una is cancelled as well (just saw Jason's email). Sigh. Well, maybe I'll get some research done this spring...*

*I'm only teaching a grad seminar, so it should be easy to manage mine -- not much changes.*



[In a separate thread that day, Jason officially canceled]

*Given the chancellor's announcement today that Pitt will move entirely to online coursework through the rest of the semester, I have decided in consultation with the Humanities Center to cancel Una Chaudhuri's visit to our campus. I will be emailing her to this effect later today. We make this decision not at all likely and with great regret, but I believe it is wisest to be proactive in order to protect everyone's health and conserve our resources during this time.*

*Let me take this opportunity to thank the three of you - and by extension the Environmental Humanities Research Seminar, the World History Center, and the Global Studies Center - for seizing the opportunity of Una's visit and preparing such wonderful events around her. I have so enjoyed our collaboration so far and wish that it could have continued through fruition. I know we would all have had an amazing and intellectual invigorating time.*

*As many of you now, I will be moving to Ann Arbor this summer to begin work in fall 2020 as an assistant professor of English at the University of Michigan. Therefore, I am not able to host a postponed visit by Una to Pitt next year. I would be more than happy, however, to facilitate your conversations with her in the coming year if any of you would like to invite her yourselves, and if my schedule allows I would relish the chance to return to Pittsburgh for such an event. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at any time (at [jfitzt@umich.edu](mailto:jfitzt@umich.edu)) on this matter if you like.*

*Again, thank you all.*

[Later in the day, Michael wrote]

*Thanks so much for all of your hard work on this event. This would have been an exciting opportunity, but I am sure that you're making the right choice under the circumstances.*

*Congratulations on your move to Michigan!*

[Meanwhile, a message from Katy has yet to be followed up]

Tuesday 10 March 2020 Katy to Michael and Ruth

*Thank you both for taking the time to meet with me and plan what will be a dynamic escapade! in to creative mapping .*

*I have attached a few images and a summary of our meeting please feel free to amend this as needed and I will look forward to working with you both . Hope your spring break travels are not hindered by a lack of hand sanitizer!*

Thursday 12 March 2020 Ruth replied:

*It was great meeting with you last week – I am so inspired about the workshop we discussed!*

*You may already have heard that Pitt has cancelled in person instruction for the remainder of the semester and that all gatherings are also being cancelled. Unfortunately that means that we will have to postpone your workshop. We're hoping and assuming that we will be able to resume*

*normal business in the fall, and we'll look forward to working with you to come up with a good date.*

*In the meantime, I wish you all good health and good wishes during this time of creative leaning-in to uncertainty,*

[Later in the day Katy replies]

*I had not heard, what a shame.*

*I was very much looking forward to the presentation.*

*Please do stay in touch and YES lets reschedule for fall.*

*Hopefully loss in the Anthropocene will not mean something completely different by then! naturally,*

[Later in the day, Ruth replies] Yes – we need Epoch of Loss now more than ever. It's too bad that we can't gather to discuss it....

*Very much looking forward to trying again in the fall, by which time we will be living in some kind of a different world...*

Monday 23 March 2020, we receive a note from a colleague about a conference on health in the Anthropocene:

*Dear Ruth, Michael – I hope this finds you and yours well and safe. Forwarding along this announcement. When I think of the Anthropocene, I think of you both!*

[Later in the day, Michael replies]

*"When I think of the Anthropocene, I think of you" -- how sweet ;)*

*seriously, thanks for sharing. Hope you are holding up with a houseful of people...*

Tuesday 24 March 2020 Ruth replies:

*Thanks! Here's the article I have found recently that I'm most compelled by, which is by environmental philosopher Thom Van Dooren, the author of Flight Ways, one of my favorite books of recent years:*

<https://newmatilda.com/2020/03/22/pangolins-and-pandemics-the-real-source-of-this-crisis-is-human-not-animal/>

*It makes the link between to high-density animal agriculture and the ways that people and animals interact at the human-wildland interface. It does a good job pointing out that this is a global phenomenon, not an Asian one.*

*I hope you're both safe, well, and stable. I'm going to send you both an invitation to a virtual dinner party soon,*

Friday 27 March 2020, Ruth writes to Michael about a number of things, including:

*Here's another epoch of loss article that just crossed my screen – similar to many others, but with more indigenous and global south reference points – and this moment feels different as well: <http://bayoakomolafe.net/project/what-climate-collapse-asks-of-us/>*

Sunday 12 April 2020 Ruth writes to Michael:

*Yes – it's hard to schedule right now – I feel like I have all the time and no time simultaneously. It's an odd feeling – and the fact that it is starting to seem routine is another sort of strangeness.*

[another 10 or 11 emails follow, trying to find a time to have a virtual happy hour. Michael gets double-booked, again, owing to a calendar malfunction. Eventually we settle on something]

Long period here where I have nothing; did I delete? Was this lost in my email change-over? Makes me reflect on conversations here at SCAS about how we think with everything being digital we have such a great archive, but actually, not. Also make me think, “What if Tim Mulgan ([Ethics for a Broken World](#)) is prescient and recurrent power outages owing to climate change cause massive server failure in the future and much of our digital record – such as it is – is lost?

Tuesday 29 September 2020 Michael to Ruth and Nicole

*I hope this finds you well, considering. Ruth and I were talking the other day (week?) about our Anthropocene initiative, and how we are a bit stymied by the pandemic, social distancing, workload, etc. But we are also seeking to revive and complete our Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene workshops, postponed from last year (after the first very fun one).*

*We hit upon the idea of a podcast in which we had a discussion on what loss is meaning to us all now, in the context of Covid-19 and the Movement for Black Lives and wildfires and hurricanes and the elections and autumn. We wondered if you would like to join us? The idea would be to share a few prompts in advance, and all meet for a four-way conversation to last 1-1.5 hours. This would then be edited down to a 30 or so minute podcast which we'd share with the wider Anthropocene group and which would also serve as an invitation for the next stage of our mapping workshop (a sort of pre-workshop reflective piece).*

*We're flexible about when to schedule this conversation. I've become adept at podcast-making and can send instructions for how we'll organize the call, etc., if you are interested (no video --*

*no need to shower!) It would be great to schedule this in the next week or two (so, between October 5 and 15) so as to fit with the timing of the mapping project.*

*If you're interested, we'll circulate some suggestions for topics/prompts, and ask for yours, and then we'll just get together and talk. It would be lovely to hear your voices.*

Wednesday 30 September 2020 Nicole replies:

*Thanks for the invite. I am game to participate in the conversation with the 3 of you sometime after Oct 5. It would be very nice to hear your voices and be in dialogue!*

*Are you envisioning the podcast to be shared only internally for the Anthropocene group/class, or would it (or could it) also be made more widely available, e.g for public consumption? Is it part of a larger series? The museum has this A for Anthropocene podcast that is hungry for content...so maybe it could be reposted there? An idea we could consider.*

Thursday 8 October 2020, following a conversation that must have occurred in gmail, we begin trying to revive the Mapping series. Ruth writes to Katy

*I hope you are doing well during these difficult times. I am always happy to see you on social media, and I think about you as one of the last people I met with before we all retreated into quarantine in March.*

*The reason I'm getting back in touch now is that Michael and I have been talking about whether there is an event that we can do with you this fall that respects social distancing but still allows participants to make some art. We're thinking that this might look like:*

- watching/listening to some musings about the theme of mapping and the Anthropocene and how to make art that marks these themes*
- "drifting" (the keyword for this series that the 3Cs Mapping Collective introduced to us) around the Pitt campus and Schenley Park, either on their own or in distant outdoor groups and recording impressions, a GPS track, taking pictures, and picking up leaves and twigs and other items that they would want to incorporate into an art work*
- picking up a physical kit of materials to use to make their own simple artwork at home that reflects the geography that they have walked through and thought about and the objects that they have assembled*
- sending us a photograph of the artwork that we can post in an online portfolio*

*These are just some ideas – we don't know if this would be interesting to you, or if it's feasible. We'd be very happy to plan a zoom meeting with you to talk through the possibilities.*

*Thanks for keeping us in mind, and hoping for some bright flashes of creativity and optimism,*

[Later that day Katy replies]

*Hello. I was just looking at some radical maps yesterday and thinking about how we might pull this off; perhaps a zoom convo is in order as we move forward. Perhaps using GPS tracker maps and found objects around the campus to define how spaces are used, GSRI historic maps contrast the built environment and the natural environment, or future environments...drifting with transportation 3Cs Mapping Collective is doing some fascinating work!*

*I have had good success with kit assembly and sharing through the SWISSVALE LIBRARY( Crankie Kit pictured below) AND CREATIVE CITIZENS STUDIOS( see maps of 80'S island and others during a digital residency over the summer's Imagination Vacation deluxe materials kit pictured)*

*I would look forward to this discussion. Perhaps this Friday( tomorrow) or next week-mornings are best for me but HAHA, my schedule is pretty open these days...*

[Later that day Ruth also writes to the folks for the GIS mapping workshop]

*Michael and I have talked about how to pick up where we left off discussions in February about the Mapping the Epoch of Loss series of events that we were planning last spring when Covid struck. We'd like to continue the events, with appropriate modifications for safety. As you will recall, we were talking about teaching students to take GPS tracks and make storymaps. We were going to do this with the environmental history and context of the Pitt campus in mind, and with an element of "drifting" – having participants walk around while thinking of the environment that they inhabit. We're thinking that what this might look like is something like:*

*--reading/watching information in advance about how to use a phone to take a GPS track and how to upload it to a computer*

*--reading/watching information about the aim of the event and the goal for what the final project might look like*

*--optionally gathering in person in Schenley Plaza for a group "drifting" event at distance outdoors (they could also do this by themselves). This would involve taking a GPS track around campus and into Panther Hollow, taking photographs, maybe recording a video of impressions, gathering some leaves and twigs and detritus for a subsequent art making event.*

*--reading/watching an intro to StoryMap*

*--Making and submitting a StoryMap, with us holding some virtual office hours along the way*

*We would love your help with all of these steps, if you're still willing to be involved. Ideally we'd have everything finished and submitted in time for GIS Day in November; though I think we could advertise this as a GIS Day event even if it is still in progress.*

*Would you be willing to meet sometime soon to talk about the details?*

*Many thanks for thinking about this,*

Monday 12 October 2020 Ali (WHC) writes to the GIS group:  
*Here is our timeline for the workshop.*

1. *Friday, October 30 Podcast with overview and objective of the workshop (Michael & Ruth)*
2. *Friday, October 30 Narrated GPS PowerPoint (Susan)*
3. *Friday, October 30 Add Podcast & PowerPoint to website*
4. *Sunday, November 8, 2pm – optional drifting in Schenley Plaza*
  - a. *Ali talk to Susan about GPS tutorial*
5. *November 16, 3pm optional synchronous meeting on Zoom with Boris – Registration required for meeting – recording added to website*
6. *Office Hours*
  1. *Ruth Monday 11/30 - 4pm*
  2. *Boris Tuesday 12/1 - 3pm*
  3. *Michael Wed 12/2 - 11 am*
  4. *Susan Thursday 12/3 2pm*

*December 15 – date projects must be submitted to be included in Gallery  
Add projects to website*

Wednesday 21 October 2020 Michael to Ruth and Nicole

*Sorry I haven't circled back to this earlier. My efforts to recruit a fourth person for our conversation have come up empty. But no worries! We can proceed with the three of us!*

*It would be great if we could set aside 90 minutes next week to record the conversation, around some agreed prompts. To make the podcast profession, I'll ask you to call in following specific instructions that will allow me to record each of our audio feeds as a separate track, which makes editing very easy. Once we agree the time and themes, we just get on together and have the conversation. It's super duper easy.*

*Let's start with timing: next week, I could do*

*Wednesday from 2:30pm on*

*Thursday from 1:30pm on*

*Friday any time*

*I should then be able to get this edited over the weekend and have it ready to roll just in time for the election!*

*Let me know your availability in those time slots, and we can proceed from there.*

Thursday 22 October 2020 Ruth forwards from Katy



[cardboard crankie.mp4](#)

*please share this little how to Crankie for starters- (this is exactly what is in the Cradboard Crankie kit)*

Friday 23 October 2020 Michael replies to Nicole and Ruth

*How about Friday at 10am? Let's all ponder some prompts and make suggestions in the next few days, we can solidify by Monday or Tuesday. I don't think it's essential to have specific questions, it works best as a conversation.*

*My own sense is that we want to reflect on the changing meaning and context of loss and the Anthropocene in light of the pandemic and the movement for black lives and the election and the recent fires – all of the conflagrations that have engulfed us since our larger group last met. We can get more specific within that, but that's the general direction I had in mind...*

Monday 26 October 2020 Susan replies re GIS mapping:

*I've upload materials for getting GPS coordinates and geotagging photos to a Box folder (<https://pitt.box.com/s/1zykule7b5wtbnwdn6ukr3nb6gymddc>). I recorded narration over the PowerPoint and saved the slides as well as exported it as a video. You can either upload just the video alone or add to the slide deck and make a longer video together or merge the videos of your introduction and my narration. I have also uploaded a PDF of the slides for quick reference.*

Tuesday 27 October 2020 Michael to Ruth

*I put out some feelers and got good feedback, and so I applied for and received permission to hold our drifting event as an actual event. We're legit! Just thought I'd let you know.*

Wednesday 28 October 2020 Ruth replies

*I love Mushroom at the End of the World! I'm interested to hear about what your plans are with it next semester – and it would also be a great jumping off point for our podcast.*

*Shall we try to do some brainstorming together about prompts for Friday? Ideally in a conversation, and not over email? I'm free tomorrow till 2 except for 11-12.*

*This critique of the Anthropocene concept is one thing that's been on my mind in recent months as well:*

*Aaron Vansintjan, "[The Anthropocene Debate: Why is Such a Useful Concept Starting to Fall Apart?](#)" *Uneven Earth: Where the Ecological Meets the Political* (2015)*

[Later that day, Ruth writes]

*Amazon's algorithms just surfaced this interesting looking book as a recommendation for me:*

[https://www.amazon.com/s?k=decolonizing+extinction&crd=2XWA2AODXM2C0&sprefix=decolonizing+ex%2Cstripbooks-intl-ship%2C309&ref=nb\\_sb\\_ss\\_fb\\_1\\_15\\_ts-doa-p](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=decolonizing+extinction&crd=2XWA2AODXM2C0&sprefix=decolonizing+ex%2Cstripbooks-intl-ship%2C309&ref=nb_sb_ss_fb_1_15_ts-doa-p)

Friday 30 October 2020 is the day we record the [podcast](#). Also that day, Ali of WHC writes

*There are two documents attached here. One for Ryan (Mapping Loss Poster) and one with information for the website (Mapping Loss Website). A few things:*

*Michael, I put your email as a contact point for someone looking to pick up a cranky kit. You could also put [WHC@pitt.edu](mailto:WHC@pitt.edu) and we can coordinate from there or per Ruth's suggestion add a set time for pick up.*

*I've added a registration that I will manage for Boris's Storyboard event. Can the GSC make the registration for the drifting event? I am not quite sure how I would do that.*

*Other links that need to be added are highlighted in yellow. We can also use the [WHC@pitt](mailto:WHC@pitt.edu) email for submitting Crankiness/StoryMaps but I was not sure if it would be easier to use an address of someone working directly with the website.*

*Please let me know if you'd like me to change anything or please edit as you see fit as it migrates to the website.*

**(where are the emails specifying the questions to think about?) there is a flurry of emails about times, links to Zencastr, etc.**

Thursday 5 November 2020 the WHC writes

*Dear World History Center Community,*

*We are delighted to announce the **World History Center** is collaborating with the [Global Studies Center](#) to host "Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene," a series designed to **create a space for people to engage with their world through digital mapping and art**. Participants will have the opportunity to **reflect on human-driven climate change and to create maps and art that capture or express their relationships to the natural world** while building digital and artistic skills. This workshop can be done entirely asynchronously.*

*Through a series of virtual tutorials, participants will learn how to create a digital exhibit using ArcGIS StoryMaps as well as a Crankie art project, a kinetic sculpture powered by a simple*



crank slider mechanism. Thoughtful reflection, immersion in the natural world, and historic archives will give participants the elements to populate their StoryMaps and Crankie creations.

We will begin these activities with an optional outdoors and socially distant "drifting" event in Schenley Park this Sunday at 2 PM.

Please see the attached flyer for more details. Visit our website and register: <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/global/mapping-loss-anthropocene>

## Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss


The purpose of this workshop is to create a space for people to engage with their world through digital methods and art. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on human-driven climate change and to create maps and art that capture or express their relationships to the natural world while building digital and artistic skills. This workshop can be done entirely asynchronously.

[Visit our Website!](#)      [Register Here!](#)

### Listen.


**Mapping Loss in the Anthropocene: an Introductory Podcast**

Michael Goodhart, Ruth Western & Nicole Heller discuss and reflect on the Anthropocene as an epoch of loss.




### Watch.

- How to get GPS coordinates for geotagging photos using your cellphone.
- How to make a Crankie, a kinetic sculpture, powered by a simple crank slider mechanism.




### Collect.

- **Drifting:** Walk mindfully & attentively through a landscape. Imagine its many pasts. Collect found objects such as twigs, leaves and candy wrappers & take photos.
- Optional Drift in Schenley Plaza under the pavilion - November 8, 2 PM.
- Pick up a Crankie contraption kit at drifting event or by another arrangement.



### Create.

- A digital exhibit using ArcGIS StoryMaps. Join us for a virtual tutorial November 16, 3 PM or watch on your own.
- A Crankie contraption. Use artifacts you collect on your drift and images that you print out from Historic Pittsburgh or elsewhere to add to your art.




### Visit us.

**November 30–December 3**

Drop in for virtual office hours to talk about your creation.


View office hours on our website.



### Share!

**Share your work.** Send a link to your ArcGIS StoryMap to [WHC@pitt.edu](mailto:WHC@pitt.edu) and/or upload a video of your Crankie creation, see directions on our website.

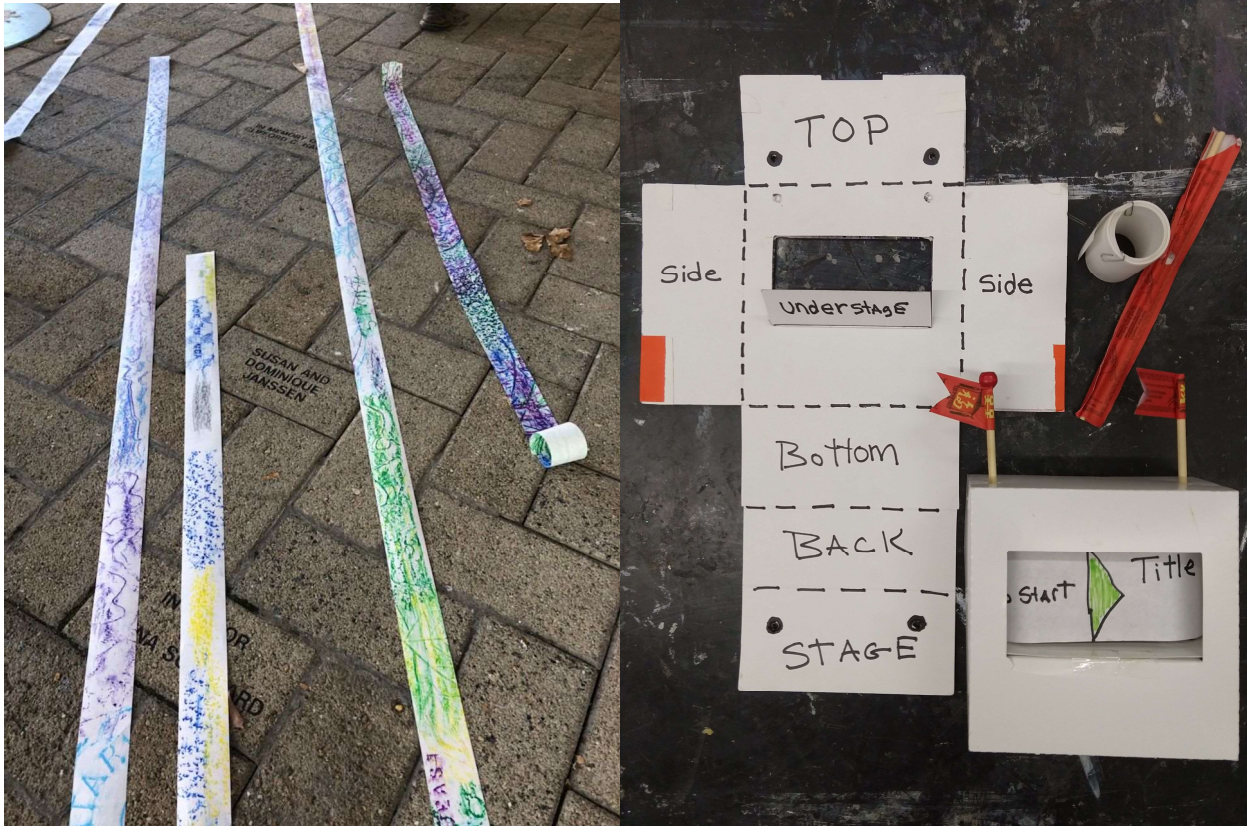
We will display them as a digital exhibit on our website!



Co-Sponsored by:   • World History Center   • Global Studies Center

Sunday 8 November 2020 – rubbings and crankies!





Monday 30 November 2020 Ruth writes:

*This is a nice article that brings together various threads of conversations and collaborations with all of you –*

<https://www.opb.org/article/2020/11/28/indigenous-peoples-in-oregon-and-beyond-are-decolonizing-maps/>

Tuesday 1 December 2020 Ruth to Michael

*I was just in an interesting webinar where someone was talking about this project: <https://stamen.com/work/field-papers/>. It looks very cool – I wish we knew about it when we were planning our mapping workshops. It might be a good thing to have in our minds for the venture we're thinking about now. I've been reading *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* recently. It's not well written (the worst kind of cultural studies prose, and poorly edited to boot), but it is very beautiful and radical. I'm thinking that it would be nice to organize a seminar meeting around it, if we can come up with a date and format that would work.*

Monday 28 December 2020 Ruth writes to Michael:

*This is another interesting article about people stepping back from the science and the discourse around the apocalyptic language of climate collapse. I have definitely adjusted my own thinking and rhetoric on these matters since you and I first started talking about this – though I am not sure exactly where I am ending up yet. I just finished reading Nick Estes' *Our History is the Future*, which is not exactly about climate – it's about #NoDAPL and Indigenous water protection – but it's related to all this, and it's a beautiful and radical book. Estes was supposed to visit the Humanities Center last spring right after we all locked down; I do not know whether he is going to be making a virtual visit during the coming semester.*

*Let me know if you want to meet for a stroll or an outdoor coffee sometime on a warmer and drier day – it would be nice to get together.*

*Deep Adaptation and the Science of Climate Change* <https://nyti.ms/38Ck9W5>

[Later that day, Michael replies]

*Looks interesting!*

*There are a couple of things to talk about related to this, including;*

*Reworking/renaming our (GSC) Anthropocene initiative – I'm thinking "critical world ecologies"*

*The student project on campus and local namesakes*

*A Mushrooms project...*

*Let's shoot for a walk in the new year – I'm in serious quarantine at the moment, as I'm going to go visit my aged parents right after New Year's.*

*Hope you all are well – looking forward to connecting in the new year!*

Monday 4 January 2021 Ruth writes

*I hope you had a great new year. It must have been good to get out of town and to see your parents. I have not seen my mom in California for a year – that's been the hardest part of the pandemic for me.*

*I like the idea of a critical and rhizomic rethinking of the Anthropocene initiative – it would be good to meet and brainstorm. My calendar is still pretty open, so let me know what will work for you. Phipps is now reopened, so we can always stroll in the greenhouse tropics if the weather outdoors is too cold and cloudy.*

[some logistics about when and how to meet]

Wednesday 6 January 2021 Ruth writes:

Monday would be great. I'm free any time. Shall we meet outside of Phipps? Say at 3? If the weather is nice we can stroll outside, and if it's not so nice we can go in?

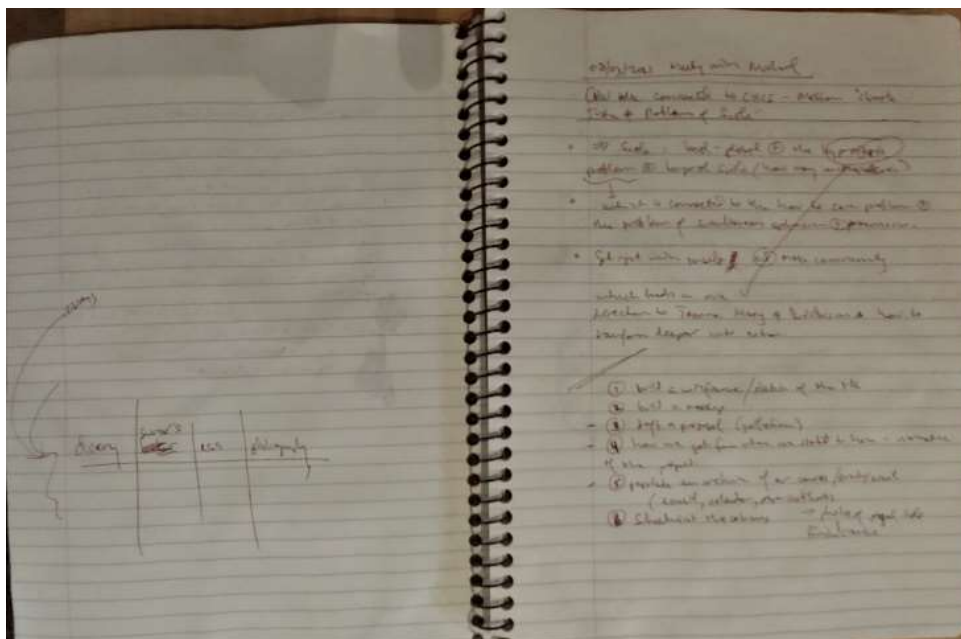
We've just gotten confirmation from Tiffany Lethabo King that she will join us at the World History Center for a virtual visit next month, for a talk that's very relevant to Yusoff's book and all of these ideas:

Title: *Red and Black Alchemies of the Flesh*

Bio: Tiffany King is an Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Georgia State University. Her research is situated at intersections of slavery and indigenous genocide in the Americas. King's book [\*The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies\*](#) (Duke University Press, 2019) argues that scholarly traditions within Black Studies that examine Indigenous genocide alongside slavery in the Americas have forged ethical and generative engagements with Native Studies—and Native thought—that continue to reinvent the political imaginaries of abolition and decolonization. King is also co-editor of an anthology titled [\*Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Black Racism\*](#) (Duke University Press 2020).

Monday 11 January 2021 a flurry of emails about a meeting to happen – in person! We ultimately settle on Schenley Plaza.

I have no notes from that meeting...



[A series of emails around a new call for Sawyer seminars. At that point, Michael is aware he'll be on leave in Sweden next academic year, and we decide that an NIH summer Institute grant might be a better use of our energy...]

Wednesday 10 February 2021 Michael to GSC faculty advisory board (which includes Ruth) on the topic of revising the Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss initiative; new title Critical World Ecologies:

*Attached please find the revised descriptions of our undergraduate Critical World Ecologies certificate concentration, and our Critical World Ecologies and Contested Cities initiatives. Your comments and feedback were very helpful, and I hope the changes capture the spirit of the conversation.*

*I'll hold off for a week on updating our website and other materials, in case you have any further feedback.*

[Later that day Ruth replies to the draft]

*This looks great, Michael.*

*I would suggest adding "labor exploitation" to the bullet point about slavery and trafficking: "ecological impacts of modern slavery, trafficking, and labor exploitation."*

*I would also strike the word "port" from "port cities" in the first urban bullet point, so that it would read "Cities as key nodes in global networks over time" (I'm not sure that it needs the "over time" qualifier either, given the reference to world-historical perspectives in the previous paragraph).*

*I wonder about the specification of the 21<sup>st</sup> century at the beginning of the Contested Cities description, especially in light of the reference to history in the following paragraph. I think this could read "Cities are..." rather than "In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cities have emerged as..." without changing the rest of the description, and that would make it more capacious and accessible to people working on earlier times or longer term trends.*

---

### **Critical World Ecologies**

Present discussions about the catastrophic and rapid changes now underway in the earth system—transformations that include the mass extinction of species, the inundation of cities, and the collapse of entire ecosystems—focus largely upon concepts like sustainability, mitigation, and resilience. After all, the continued existence of human life on earth may, in fact, depend upon efforts to geoe engineer the atmosphere or the reefs, and it is understandable that we wish to protect the remaining members of beloved nonhuman species.

In recent years, "the Anthropocene" has emerged as a framework for integrating scholarship across the arts, humanities, and social and natural sciences in a conversation about our unequally

shared ecological predicament. While the Anthropocene usefully focuses our attention on the long history of humans shaping and being shaped by nature, it also erases the operations of racial capitalism and obscures the myriad ways in which climate change is differentially produced and experienced by differently situated people around the globe.

The Global Studies Center’s “Critical World Ecologies” initiative assembles an interdisciplinary group of scholars, activists, artists, curators, policy-makers, and writers from on and beyond our campus to explore broad transnational and world-historical processes that condition how humans think about and exploit nature as well as the contemporary social, cultural, economic, and political relations through which environments are continually reproduced. Broadly, we want to explore the ethical, epistemological, and artistic challenges of doing theory and history in times of profound global climatic upheaval and transformation. We are interested in topics such as:

- racial capitalism and plantation economies;
- historical and contemporary relations of colonialism and imperialism and their ecological impacts;
- slow violence and environmental injustice;
- adaptation strategies such as degrowth and reparation;
- the normative, political, and psychological significance of loss.

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12 August 2021 Ruth to Michael

*This is a nice bibliography –*

[https://gendread.substack.com/p/resources-for-working-with-climate?r=2cr1d&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=facebook](https://gendread.substack.com/p/resources-for-working-with-climate?r=2cr1d&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email&utm_source=facebook)

## **Chapter 5. Moving. Ahead?**

Thursday 22 July 2021 we receive this invitation from our friend Noah over at CMU

*Dear Ruth and Michael,*

*David Shumway, Abigail Owen, and I are currently planning a series of public talks and colloquia around the theme of Climate Justice for the upcoming academic year. This is for the CMU Humanities Center's regular seminar series, but also connected to a larger international initiative on "[Climate Justice and Problems of Scale](#)." We'd like to invite you to give a joint presentation on your "Epoch of Loss" project – what inspired the project, what it's since generated or inspired, anything you think might interest an interdisciplinary audience. In addition to the presentation, we would ask you to participate in a colloquium the following day in which the lecture and an additional text--published or unpublished--of yours would be discussed. We can offer an honorarium of \$500 each. Normally, the lectures are on Thursdays at 4:30pm, and the colloquium sessions are on Fridays at noon. In terms of dates, it would be a Thursday/Friday of your choosing sometime between September 16/17 and November 11/12 (excluding September 30 / October 1). We have some flexibility as to dates, and will do our best to accommodate your schedule.*

*Please let us know if you're interested and available – it would be an honor to feature your work in the series.*

Friday 23 July 2021 Michael writes to Ruth in response to the invitation:

*Hmmm. I'm away, as you know, but the wonders of tech mean that I could join in. We could use this as an opportunity to try to write something – or at least, to try out some ideas that would be the core of what we would write...*

*I'd be happy to invest some hours in this, though I won't want to commit to a big push in the fall as I need to get a good start on the book when I get to Uppsala.*

*Hope you are well!*

Monday 26 July 2021 Ruth writes to Michael

*I agree – it would be nice to begin giving shape to some of our thoughts and conversations, so if you don't mind doing your part remotely, this would be great. Do you want to tell Noah and Abigail that we'll do it? And should we meet some time? Or start with a shared document?*

[Later that day, Ruth writes]



She cites this book, which looks very interesting: <https://www.amazon.com/Environmental-Melancholia-Psychoanalytic-dimensions-Explorations/dp/0415727995>

Tuesday 27 July 2021 Michael writes to Ruth

*Interesting indeed!*

*As I reread their invitation to write a reply, I noticed that we have to commit to having something drafted for the “colloquium” part of this on the Friday (published or unpublished, it says, so a draft is OK). Are we willing to do that, and, if so, should we choose a date toward the end of their range? Are there any that don’t work for you?*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

*Yes, that sounds good. Let’s plan on writing something – it will be a good exercise – and that does imply that we should choose a date toward the end of the fall. The only dates that don’t work for me among the ones they suggest are 9/16, 9/23, 10/14, and 11/18.*

[Later that day, Michael writes]

*I’ll suggest November 11/12*

Tuesday 27 July 2021 Michael writes to Noah et al

*Thank you for the kind invitation, and apologies for the slow reply. Ruth and I were puzzling out a few things, one of which is the fact that I will be away this year on a fellowship and so not available for an in-person event.*

*Assuming you are OK with my participating virtually, we’d be happy to do this. We’ve been looking for (awaiting?) the chance (nudge?) to wrap this together and reflect on it a bit. We will need to write something specifically for the colloquium, so Nov 11/12 would be great for us.*

Wednesday 28 July 2021 Ruth writes to Michael

*Sounds good!*

*How would you like to proceed with writing? We could start with a social/brainstorming in person get-together and then move to a Google Doc? When do you leave town?*

[Later that day, Michael writes]

*I like that plan: meet to brainstorm and get started, and then use a google doc...*

*I'm around until the end of August, with various visits to out-of-town family being paid before my departure. So: weekends are bad, but weekdays are pretty OK*

[Some logistical back and forth follows, and we settle on a meeting at Trace Brewing in Bloomfield on Tuesday August 3]

Monday 2 August 2021 from Noah

*Thank you again for the quick reply – and apologies for the delay on our end. We're confirmed for your public talk on Thursday, November 11, at 4:30pm and seminar discussion on Friday, November 12, at noon. We've still got some thinking to do about format, but no matter what, we'll plan to have Michael join remotely. Of course, we'll be in touch about that and other details as the date nears.*

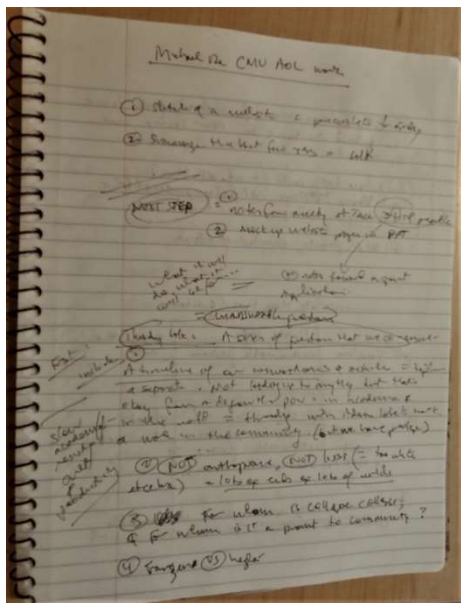
*Here's to enjoying the last few weeks of summer break,*

Monday 9 August 2021 Ruth writes to Michael

*I just @'d you on Twitter about this:*

*<https://twitter.com/xkcd/status/1424751478766514181/photo/1>. This XKCD graphic is just exactly what we are talking about. It is really great.*

*While I'm at it, here are my notes about what we agreed to work on this fall:*



--A sketch/wireframe of the website we're talking about

--A mockup in Google Sheets that has the columns we're talking about and a few exemplary events and items for each one

--A description/draft proposal for the project

--A narrative of how we got from our earlier "Epoch of Loss" framing through various iterations to where we've ended up for now

--A timeline of our conversations, events, et cetera

We're talking about four themes (timeline facets) that people can contribute to, view, and assemble in various ways:

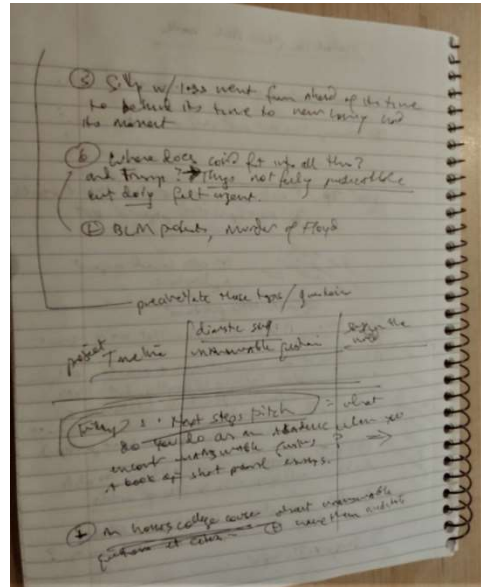
--Personal diaries: dated entries about life events and feelings and experiences

--RSS feeds of climate sensor data, which may be tied to locations (daily temperature at my home, at the North Pole....)

--RSS feeds of relevant news events: fires and floods, social movements, elections...

--Bibliographies of videos, books, blog posts, et cetera

The functionality needs to: 1) allow for people to create their own essays that reference the various themes over a period of time (such as climate in my lifetime like the XKCD graphic) including both the past and the future, 2) allow people to customize feeds, 3) telescope time in and out from minutes to millennia.



I have not looked at today's IPCC report, but I did make note of this interactive atlas feature: <https://interactive-atlas.ipcc.ch/>. I haven't looked at it yet.

[Later that day (Monday 9 August) Michael replied]

Yes, today's report is much on my mind (though I also haven't read it, I read about it before I went to bed last night (mistake) and I've been thinking about our project (and everything I'm doing) in light of it.

Your summary matches my notes (or at least my recollection; I'm in the office and my notebook is at home...) If I detect any discrepancies, I'll let you know.

Love the graph from Twitter; I pitched our outline to my friend the other day, and she loved it.

[Later that day Ruth replies]

I also just came across this talk by Juno Salazar Parreñas which in some ways looks like pretty standard critical extinction studies stuff, but I love the formulation of "pronouns for an apocalyptic future" as a way of thinking about the problem of "we."

<https://www.chstm.org/events/pronouns-apocalyptic-future>

Friday 27 August 2021 Ruth to Michael

*This is not exactly what we're dreaming up, but it's the closest thing I've seen. It takes a while to load...*

<https://whatismissing.org/>

Sunday 5 September 2021 Michael to Ruth

*Thanks for this, and for the bibliography you sent. I've finally gotten out of Pittsburgh and made it to Sweden, having finished off a whole ton of work before I left. As soon as I overcome my jet lag (very soon I hope), I plan to throw myself into this and other projects that I haven't had time to focus on for years.*

*so, more soon... Hope you are well and that the term is off to a good start (whatever that means these days).*

Monday 6 September 2021 (dates unreliable, as I can't tell if computer is adjusting date stamps for my new time zone). Ruth replies to Michael

*Sounds good! It's weird out there, largely because Pitt and Allegheny County are actually not very covid-y, but not everyone is equally caught up with that perspective. One thing to mull over as we think about our work on emotions about the apocalypse, which I didn't quite understand until recently, is that there are people who come to identify (for various reasons, some of which are understandable) with doom thinking and doom rhetoric. Anyway, it's a good year for a sabbatical!*

Thursday 23 September 2020 from Noah

*I hope that this finds you both well and that your semester has been good so far. As we prepare to release announcements and promotional materials for the CMU Humanities Center's upcoming Climate Justice seminars, including yours, we're writing to touch base with you about some of the details.*

*First, because of the pandemic and challenges with cross-institutional events, we've decided that all of this fall's programming will be virtual. We'll ensure that you receive the zoom links well in advance.*

*Second, we'd like to confirm the titles for your public lecture and seminar. Although it's the title of your project, I wasn't sure whether "Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss" would be the title for either or both.*

*Please let David and me know at your earliest convenience.*

Tuesday 28 September 2021 from Noah

*A quick follow-up, if I may, as I've now understood that it's ideal for the promo materials, Zoom link, etc., to have a distinct title for the Friday seminar. Would you be OK with titling it 'Outcomes of an interdisciplinary collaboration' (or project)? Or maybe 'Reflections on...'? I suppose it depends on what your precirculated paper will address, but to me that seemed general enough to give you flexibility.*

*Thank you and apologies for the multiple emails!*

[Also that day, Michael writes to Ruth]

*replying to this older message because it helpfully contains the outline of the stuff we said we'd do. As I'm thinking about the two presentations for Noah (his recent email asked for two distinct titles), I was reflecting again on this and thinking that there are really two distinct "work packages" here.*

*1 is looking back from the present to the origins of the initiative and how we got from there to here. This should, I think, be the Thursday afternoon talk, where we reflect on the journey.*

*2 is the forward-looking thinking about the website, with all of the stuff that's laid out here as part of that story. This is, I think, the subject of what will be the pre-circulated material (I hesitate to call it a paper -- it will include the web site wire frame, the google sheets, the various feeds, bibliographies, etc.*

*So, we need a title for each of these (if you agree this is the right way to divide it up). I don't think Noah's kind suggestions about "outcomes" or "reflections on" work for the Friday morning session, honestly. Here are some thoughts to get the ball rolling:*

*1) "Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss." If there weren't already a colon, I'd add :reflections on.... I suppose, if we wanted, we could drop "Anthropocene" and go with "Epoch of Loss: Reflections on..." I am very comfortable with either of these or variations, or something else if you have an inspiration.*

*2) Here I don't have clear ideas, but I think we want to signal something about how this project turns the familiar academic product "inside out" -- by which I mean, it's more personal, more diaristic, etc. It's also proto-proposal-ish in nature. So we want to signal the forward-looking, next steps aspects. I am not having any brainwaves here. The words in my head are things like*  
*-- chroncling loss*  
*-- climate diaries*  
*-- engaging loss*  
*-- ???*

*Finally, fwiw, I attach the text of a lecture I gave last week here in Uppsala at the ceremony welcoming the new class of [Pro Futura Scientia](#) fellows at the Swedish Collegium. Gives you a sense of where my mind has been on this lately (it's short, ~3000 words). I attach it in part*

*because I wonder if parts of it might be relevant for this work -- which I'm viewing increasingly in terms of collage and pastiche and less and terms of more conventional outputs or outcomes.*

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## **Scholarship in and For a Broken World**

Thank you, Christina. It's an honor for me to have this opportunity to speak on this occasion, and a special privilege to help welcome the new fellows. Congratulations!

My twofold charge was to share a little bit about my own work and to offer some reflections on the challenges of undertaking scholarship in this time. I shall do so, perhaps somewhat obliquely, and I worry somewhat inappropriately, through the lens of *Scholarship in and for a Broken World*.

Let me say a little bit about myself, and my own research, as a prelude to the concept of a "broken world." I was trained as a political theorist. Political theorists are in some respects like mules. For one thing, we are the offspring of two genetically different parents: philosophy and political science. We tend to be more practical and problem-oriented than philosophers and more critically- and normatively-attuned than political scientists. Often we are claimed by neither; frequently, we are disliked by both.

I study the contemporary conditions of possibility of emancipatory politics. How might we make our social arrangements more democratic? What does "more democratic" mean? Can human rights be effective tools in challenging metastatic social and economic inequalities? How might we have to re-conceptualize them if they are to be useful in this struggle? Who is responsible for climate change? What, about our present understandings of responsibility and about present power relations in our world, makes that question so difficult to answer? These questions arise between philosophy and politics; they are at once conceptual and practical, abstract and timely.

Another way in which political theorists resemble mules is that we often toil in many fields. I have been increasingly drawn to interdisciplinary collaboration, not because I think it is inherently virtuous—at least, not any more virtuous than deep disciplinary study—but because the questions that interest me demand it. One of the primary ways in which I've pursued such collaboration is through my university's Global Studies Center which I direct. The Center is unusual in several respects. It is not a part of any school or faculty; we have nearly 300 affiliated colleagues in Law, Business, Nursing, Policy, Medicine, Education, Public Health and Social Work— as well as in roughly 29 of the 31 departments in the Arts and Sciences. We are not a research Center; instead, we sponsor and promote research led by our affiliates and offer programming designed to fertilize and nurture interdisciplinary scholarship. We do so in four broad thematic areas that reflect the interests of our faculty and the strengths of our university: Migrations, Global Health, Contested Cities, and Critical World Ecologies.

That last initiative, Critical World Ecologies, brings me closer to my topic this afternoon. We live in an era of unexpectedly rapid and potentially catastrophic changes. These changes are

manifest in the routine inundation of cities, in increasingly severe and unpredictable weather, the plastification of our oceans, profound shifts in the productivity of land under cultivation, a new great extinction, and potentially the collapse of entire ecosystems.

Much of the mainstream discussion around climate change today focuses on sustainability, conservation, and emissions reduction. It's perfectly obvious why: we would like to live in a way that doesn't destroy the planet; we would like to hold on to what we have (charismatic macrofauna, like polar bears; our way of life). We would like to think that by reducing our personal or organizational carbon footprints, we can avert disaster—to think that we have control. However well-intentioned, these ideas are pernicious; they enable a subtle but pervasive form of climate denialism—of being *in denial*, about the severity and gravity of changes that are already underway, about their likely impacts, and about the inadequacy of our current response.

In recent years, “the Anthropocene” has emerged as a more holistic framework for research and theory related to climate change. While this concept usefully focuses our attention on the long history of humans shaping and being shaped by nature, it obscures that climate change is *differentially* produced and experienced by *differently* situated people around the globe; it erases historical and contemporary responsibility by implicating all humans in producing this crisis.

Our “Critical World Ecologies” initiative both uses and questions the Anthropocene as a framework for understanding our unequally shared ecological predicament. The initiative is an interdisciplinary assemblage of scholars, artists, writers, activists, curators, and policy-makers from on and beyond our campus, dedicated to understanding the social, cultural, economic, and political relations through which environments are continually reproduced. We explore the broad transnational and world-historical processes that shape how humans think about and exploit nature. We seek to illuminate the ethical, epistemological, and aesthetic challenges for theory, history, governance, and activism in times of profound global climatic upheaval. We strive to balance the urgency of these challenges with the need for critical and personal reflection.

In addressing these topics, interdisciplinarity is both invaluable and insufficient. Invaluable, because the complexity of climate change, of its causes and repercussions, demands that we draw on many types of knowledge and insight. Insufficient, because we have to find ways to break our habits of thinking—the very habits that have attended, and to a significant extent enabled, the present crisis. Breaking those habits is hard; it requires metacognition, thinking about our own thinking, which interdisciplinarity doesn't automatically stimulate.

And so I come, at last, to the concept of a *broken world*. Devised by the philosopher Tim Mulgan, the “broken world” is a heuristic device intended to help us recognize the assumptions and biases that structure our thinking—to boost our metacognition.

The broken world is not *completely* catastrophic; it is not a post-apocalyptic landscape of hunter-gatherers, zombies, and motorcycle warriors; it resembles our world in important ways, including in the continuation of modern, large-scale industrial society. But it is a world in which a chaotic climate makes life and social arrangements precarious. Electricity is unreliable. Material resources, especially fresh water, are scarce. Society cannot always meet everyone's needs. Our affluent way of life is no longer possible.

As Mulgan stresses, the broken world is a credible future, by which he means that we cannot be confident that it won't happen. It involves no outlandish claims, no scientific impossibilities, and no implausible expectations about human behavior. Still, many other futures—some much better, some much worse—are also credible. The present state of our science and understanding means that we cannot confidently assign meaningful probabilities to the various scenarios.

Scientific consensus is that warming beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius will be highly dangerous; beyond that point, dire and potentially irreversible changes could be locked in (for example, through negative feedback loops). The most recent IPCC report anticipates that we are on track for 2 degrees Celsius of warming by 2040 and 4 degrees by the end of the century unless we take immediate and dramatic action. To put “dramatic action” in context: if all of the targets in the Paris Agreement are met—and they will not be—the result will be about 3 degrees Celsius of warming. This is just to emphasize that a broken world is not some remote theoretical possibility; indeed, on current trajectories, something like broken world seems not only plausible but perhaps likely. In any case, the point is not to predict; it is to aid our metacognition.

What would it mean to do scholarship *in* and *for* a broken world? I'll talk briefly about three sets of considerations – call them material, intellectual, and existential. By material considerations, I just mean the pre-conditions for our scholarship. Here at SCAS, we are encouraged and generously supported in carrying out “curiosity-driven research” on topics of our own choosing. In a world of widespread scarcity and deprivation, would such a mission be an unaffordable luxury? How would we justify—could we justify—research that did not directly contribute to addressing immediate and pressing challenges of survival or to easing the physical, emotional, and psychological suffering of living in a broken world?

What would higher education look like? Would our disciplines exist as publicly-supported fields of inquiry? Would a society with scarce resources invest in the kind of scholarship that we do? How would our future counterparts persuade society that it should support them? Ought they to try?

Who will their students be, and what would be the purpose of their education? Would university degrees be available only for a small elite—a class elite, if it were still tolerated, or a technocratic elite dedicated to the management of scarcity and conflict and to the maintenance and development of crucial technologies and infrastructure? What would the implications of that be? What would it mean for democracy? Or for culture—the possibility of a life elevated above the drudgery of mere survival?

How would scholars conduct their work in a world where travel had become impossible? This past 18 months has given us some insight into this question, but we have generally treated this as a temporary interruption rather than a permanent or at least recurrent condition. Consider our responses, in light of the future unreliability of electricity. And what if pandemics like the present one were commonplace, as some environmental biologists and eco-epidemiologists fear? What would continual displacement owing to severe and unpredictable weather mean for scholarship and for education?



Let me turn now to intellectual considerations, to the substantive focus of our work. What questions will scholars in a broken world ask? Will they reorient their thinking entirely toward survival? Could they afford not to? What would such a reorientation look like in the various disciplines?

Mulgan argues that in a broken world, rights-based ethical frameworks, which are prevalent today will have to give way to some form of utilitarianism as basic necessities are subjected to periodic rationing (again, we got a taste of this during the pandemic). That seems plausible and frightening. I can easily imagine a revival of the “full belly thesis,” an argument made by nominally-leftist authoritarian regimes in the 1970s and 1980s, that human rights were a luxury that society could only afford after everyone had been fed. How will we defend rights in a world of scarcity?

The broken world, Mulgan shows, also helps to reveal deeper assumptions that structure contemporary ethics and political theory. In these fields—my fields—we have taken for granted that future people will be better off than we are and that the interests of different generations largely coincide. We have reflexively assumed that we are theorizing under what John Rawls, adapting an idea of the Scottish Enlightenment philosopher David Hume, called reasonably favorable conditions. This is a term of art for a level of resources and social sophistication necessary for the realization of justice. [Of course, we don’t *assume* that justice *will* be realized... uh, anyway,] Mulgan’s point is that in the broken world, conditions are *not* reasonably favorable. How does that change the way we frame questions about fairness and about what we owe to others? How does it alter our fundamental assumptions about the aims and ends of government and society? How can reflecting on those questions help us think better now?

I could proliferate examples from my own discipline; the point is to invite you to reflect on yours, not just as an exercise, but deeply, as a way of recognizing and questioning your habits of thinking.

Let me turn now to the existential questions. I wonder what our future colleagues would want to know about the present—which from their vantage point would look like the end of a relatively brief historical interlude during which formalized learning was relatively widespread and academic research was (by their standards) generously supported.

What will they think of our affluent practices—of our flying hundreds or thousands of miles to give a talk, eat dinner, and leave the next morning? Of our gathering in our thousands in massive convention centers to speak for 10 minutes to half-empty rooms before dispersing to trendy restaurants serving meat, alcohol, and other extravagant and irresponsible fare? Will they wonder how we justified this to ourselves in light of the impending disaster? Or, perhaps, marvel that we failed to think of it in these terms?

They will want to understand the social and psychological forces that contributed to the breaking of the planet. How did we allow lies and conspiracies to circulate unchecked through social media? How did we permit fossil fuel corporations to frame a debate about the future of

humanity as a choice between jobs and the environment? How did we allow them—and allow ourselves—to treat a crisis rooted in a carbon-based economy as a problem of personal virtue?

Most pointedly: how will they reckon with the failure of their counterparts in that affluent past—us—to prevent the world from breaking? What will they ask and learn about the complicity of their various disciplines? Will they wonder at our silence? Will they accept “those were not our questions” as an adequate account of it? How, they will wonder, did the best educated generation of people in history allow this to happen? Surely they will want to know how we remained in denial for so long.

[pause]

Enough. I hope you will forgive me for violating the norms that govern occasions like this one, norms stipulating that one should say a few clever but mostly banal words that leave everyone feeling edified and eager for food and drink. But we cannot allow such niceties to insulate us from the discomfort that questions like these rightly provoke.

After all, our world is *already* broken. Higher education *is* primarily for the elite; scholarship *is* already a privilege enjoyed by very few. There is widespread popular suspicion of what we do and, frankly, of us. Some of that is class and cultural resentment and the perception of being condescended to. Some of it is fanned and manipulated by opportunistic politicians and their enablers. Still, we should not underestimate the breadth and depth of popular disdain for experts and for rarefied scholarship. Are we doing enough to combat it?

Our world is broken in more fundamental ways as well. Millions of people have already been displaced by climatic change [as Francesca knows well]. Billions live without secure access to clean water, adequate food, or reliable electricity in conditions of extreme precarity *today*.

Let me be clear that I am not advocating an instrumentalist approach to science and scholarship that would harness all of our labors to mitigating and adapting to climate change. That would be a terrible mistake. We should never orient ourselves to the maintenance of bare existence but rather always strive to make existence more bearable and more beautiful. How would we survive without literature? Without knowing and understanding our past and one another? Without a detailed appreciation of the processes and circumstances that resulted in the broken world? We need scholarship that will help us navigate the future, and the present, with humanity and compassion.

I also certainly don't want to hasten or encourage the kind of metrics- and assessment- culture that Cris studies. Such a culture seems almost designed to reinforce groupthink and to stifle meaningful reflection or metacognition. And while I do worry about a creeping customer-service orientation in our universities, we have to consider our students, who are frequently forgotten in discussions like this. A survey just published in *The Lancet* found that 59% of people aged 16-25 are very or extremely worried about climate change, and 84% are at least moderately worried. Over half felt sad, anxious, angry, powerless, helpless, or guilty, and close to half said that their feelings about climate change negatively affected their daily lives and functioning. Are we doing enough in response?

Perhaps most of all, I don't want to appear ungrateful for the efforts of our hosts here at SCAS. On the contrary, I am encouraged by the commitment to initiatives like the one we are celebrating today and like the Global Horizons Programme, and by the broader commitment to creative, curiosity-driven investigation, which is essential for avoiding the worst and for making the best of whatever future awaits us. Besides, I believe that interdisciplinary collaboration will be obligatory in the future, a requirement of tackling the profound complexity of fundamental questions of survival. But interdisciplinarity is hard; it requires time, trust, and resources. This is a unique environment, but one that cannot be scaled up. How can we promote everyday interdisciplinarity, especially in universities increasingly squeezed financially, where measures of disciplinary or departmental success can determine whether our units and our jobs survive?

In closing, let me again beg your forgiveness for breaking the rules. But the thing is, like mules, political theorists can be stubborn. The truth is, I do want you to be uneasy. As scholars, we have a responsibility to the future and for the future. By provoking dis-ease, I hope to encourage you to reflect on that responsibility and on how we might best meet it, as individual researchers and as a community of scholars. Understood that way, perhaps these remarks are appropriate after all, for an occasion when we have gathered to welcome and toast a new class of *Pro Futura* fellows. Thank you.

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Friday 1 October 2021 Ruth writes

*Thanks for this. I agree, it makes sense for us to think about our Thursday event and our Friday event separately as you suggest. Let's use "Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss" for the forward thinking Friday part, since I can envision that some version of that will be the title of whatever website we ultimately put together (I am starting to sour on the term Anthropocene, which might be part of our Thursday reflections, but that's another matter). For Thursday, I like some of the terms like collage and pastiche that you used in your note. I also like the term diary. And then I want to capture somehow that this has emerged through conversation between the two of us.*

*So.... The Epoch of Loss: Diaries of Collaboration? Out on a limb and mostly tongue in cheek (but this could be the seed of something) something like The Epoch of Loss: Toward Collective Pastiche of the End of the World.*

*I'll take a look at the document you sent. This has been a hectic semester so far, in some ways more so than last year, since everything is so ambiguous...*

Monday 4 October 2021 Ruth to Michael, forwarding the Humanities Center email:

*Want to apply for a co-teaching fellowship for Epoch of Loss things through the Humanities Center??*

[Later that day, Michael writes}

*I'm with you for Friday.*

*For Thursday, what if we combined them: Diaries of the Epoch of Loss: Toward Collective Pastiche of an End of a World (note substitution of an and a for the and the)*

*no worries about the doc, it's just a window on my thinking. I'm thinking the Thursday part might be an interesting back and forth between us, a kind of structured conversation around the diaries part and where we've ended up...*

[Later that day, Ruth writes]

*I like that – and very much support a/an rather than the. It captures the sense of hesitancy and assemblage that has animated our thinking. Do you want to send this along to Noah?*

[Later that day, Michael writes:]

*Great, yes. And let's apply for co-teaching!*

Tuesday 5 October 2021 Michael writes to Noah

*Sorry we dropped the ball. For Thursday, we'd like to use the title "Diaries of the Epoch of Loss: Toward Collective Pastiche of an End of a World," and for Friday, we'll stick with "Anthropocene: Epoch of Loss."*

*Thanks for the nudge, and looking forward,*

[Wednesday 14 October 2021 Michael and Ruth meet in Zoomspace to discuss plans for the presentations at CMU; Michael subsequently creates a google doc with summary of the conversation...]

Saturday 23 October 2021 Michael to Ruth

*I've noticed you haven't had a chance to look at / edit the google doc for our upcoming presentation. I was hoping to put in some time on it this weekend, but I'm a little hesitant to go too far forward until I have your confirmation that things are on the right track. I'm going to poke at it a little bit now, but was curious when you think you'll be able to take a look? Also, do you still want to meet on Monday, or would you rather push that back?*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

*I'm getting to it now, and I'll be working on it for much of the rest of today and into tomorrow. Let's plan to meet on Monday as scheduled.*

Sunday 24 October 2021 Michael writes to Ruth

*Just as an FYI,*

*I have spent a couple of hours this morning putting together a document that I hope might prove useful to all of this.*

*I am not done, but I am going through all of our emails related to this and constructing them in the form of a diary/story. This includes quoted email threads, along with drafts of various documents / grants that have been submitted along the way. It's oddly fun doing it, and seeing how episodic the whole process has been.*

*I've made it up to the point where we are starting to consider the MCSI grant, so there's more to do. I sadly don't have my notebooks with me, so that there are meetings (on dates I reconstructed from my calendar and email threads) but I don't have records of what we talked about at those meetings.*

*Anyway, I attach what I have so far. Let me know if you think it's worth continuing. This might be part of what we precirculate, and / or might be helpful in populating the timelines...*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

*I think this is great – maybe as an appendix – and I like showcasing the routine complaints about rushing and drowning in light of our planned discussion of slowness. I noted this in what I wrote yesterday as well. We could even do more with this, I think.*

*Maybe we should also include all of our past proposals as appendixes, and highlight how they evolved from Sawyer to Seed/Mascaro to Year of Creativity.*

*I have all my notebooks, so I can reconstruct what we talked about at various meetings, if that seems helpful – though it might be redundant with the other things we have?*

[Later that day, Michael replies]

*all of the text of all of the proposals are part of this doc. so yes, it's a giant appendix, and I'm glad you like it too -- I love the really diaristic aspect of it, all of the petty stuff, and also the way the project stops and goes, and gets influenced by random outside events like Annabelle and the Colorado thing.*

*The only parts to fill in from notebooks would be what was discussed at meetings where there isn't an email summary. Photos of your notebook pages would be great to insert -- I'm trying to put in flyers, images, etc. where I have them.*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

Ah, photos of notebook pages! That is a terrific idea. I'll do that.

[Later that day, Michael to Ruth]

*oops, forgot to hit send earlier.*

*well, I'm still creating this chronicle of our Epoch of loss work - it's like a diary with the relevant emails, and then the texts of the various grants we submitted, the invitation to the Phipps lunches, etc.*

*it's getting huge, but I'm kind of loving it -- it's kind of the side of academia you never see, how things evolve, with long quiet periods, then fits of frantic work, the slow and subtle shaping and reshaping of things.*

*It's long, but people could read it -- they can skim the proposals, your syllabus, etc., But I can also see people getting into it (or else I'm down a rabbit hole...)*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

I'm still looking through my notebooks and I'll send some pictures soon. In the meantime, here's the photograph from the World History Center whiteboard that I referenced in a November 2018 email that you quote.

[Later that day, another note from Ruth]

*Here's the syllabus for my Cultural Studies class, for the related grad class at Merced that preceded it, the program for the colloquium at the end of the CLST semester (there might be more colloquium information on the CLST website – I will check), and a dropbox link to the powerpoint presentation that I delivered as part of my CLST activities in the fall semester prior to the class:*

[and again later]

A CLST link to the colloquium series associated with my class:

<https://www.culturalstudies.pitt.edu/event/2019-annual-clst-distinguished-lecture-series-sense-place-epoch-loss>

[and again later – remember, six hour time difference, makes a long joint work day]

*Okay, I think I'm going to stop for a while now. This last thing is a dropbox link to a folder with number of pages of images of raw handwritten notes on some of our conversations (and some of our lunches, and planning meetings with others such as the 3Cs group and Katy Dement). I don't have notes on all of our meetings, or necessarily the most important ones. I'm not sure how useful these are (especially since my handwriting is not very good even at its most legible, and these are all written in notes-to-self format), but they do give a sense of the materiality of thinking work, and there is definitely information in here about false starts and wishful thinking. [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/se4wszlu32rh2jy/AAD-svfyrFJ9HQOEwgfG\\_zIMa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/se4wszlu32rh2jy/AAD-svfyrFJ9HQOEwgfG_zIMa?dl=0)*

*The other thing that would be great to include would be pictures from the Katy DeMent event and our (unfinished) crankies, and pictures from the 3Cs event. If you don't have those at hand, I'll see if I can find them – and Ali should have pictures from the Katy Dement event, and maybe Veronica has pictures from the 3Cs event, as well as the map itself?*

*a link to the podcast that we made with Nicole.*

*That seems like about it for ephemera that we might want to pull together.*

*I did a bunch of polishing on the Thursday document, not so much on the Friday one. I may or may not get back to it prior to our meeting tomorrow – but I think we have enough to work with and that we are in good enough shape relative to our deadlines.*

Monday 25 October 2021 Michael to Ruth:

*Phfew - I finally finished the email chronicle -- as you'll see, it runs to well over 150 pages. I can clean it up and make it more readable later -- it's past midnight and I need to sleep.*

*I'm not sure how useful this document will be, or if anyone will read it. But I kind of love it, and I'll love it more as I go back later and add in the photos, etc.*

*I'll try to spend a bit of time in the shared doc tomorrow morning, in time for you to see it in the morning before our meeting. I think that we're at the end of the beginning, at least, and that we're in good shape, after a conversation tomorrow[this was sent at 1am], to get things finished up in good time.*

[Later that day]

*I have cleaned up and renamed the Appendix document, attached. I haven't had time to insert the photos you shared yet, but it's not urgent.*

*I've also been edited the google doc. I'm making my changes in the form of suggestions, which you can accept or rework or reject as you like. I haven't made it all of the way through, but -- a lot of the way through.*

*See you at 11/5!*

[Later that day, Ruth replies]

*I really like this document a lot! I'm turning back to the Google Doc now.*

*On my calendar, we're meeting at 10, not 11. I'm not sure what time that is for you. I can do 11, but I have another meeting at 12 (for which I have to do a few minutes of prep), so 10 will give us more time. I'm free from now until 12 (it's now 9), so whatever works for you is good.*

[Later that day, Michael replies]

*Yes, sorry, 10 your time. I can't read my calendar...*

[We meet at 10am DST in Zoomland]

Thursday 28 October 2021 Michael to Ruth

*I did a bunch of work on both docs today -- I fleshed out first attempts at much of the remaining stuff in the google doc, and I integrated your pics into the other one. I am waiting for Veronica (or you, if you have them) to send photos of the map we drew, the mollusks, the herps, or anything from the 3Cs visit that's visually fun. I have a new phone, so I don't even have THAT stuff with me.*

*I do have a crankie at home, and I'm going to try to get susan to send me a pic later. Each time I add a photo the formatted gets fubed, so once I have all the pics I can make it need and format as a pdf for easier sharing.*

*OK, I'm going to ignore this for a while; send pics if you have them, and let me know when the google doc is ready for me to take a final look (I had to turn off notifications, too many!)*

[A bunch of emails follow in which Ruth excavates and sends photos to Michael for use in this document]

Saturday 30 October 2021: This is now a live chronicle: I have caught up to the present: Editing here is finished, and in the google doc as well. I am about to hit send on an email with this text:

*Thanks for this. I've gone back through it, accepted the vast vast majority of your changes, and made just a few more. Where I fixed mistakes, I didn't track the change (including one or two spots where I replaced dashes with commas or parentheses to aid readability). But I did track the couple of changes that seemed like you might want to review them. I attached an updated word doc here, into which I also inserted page numbers. You can simply accept changes (assuming you want to) and then it's ready to send!*

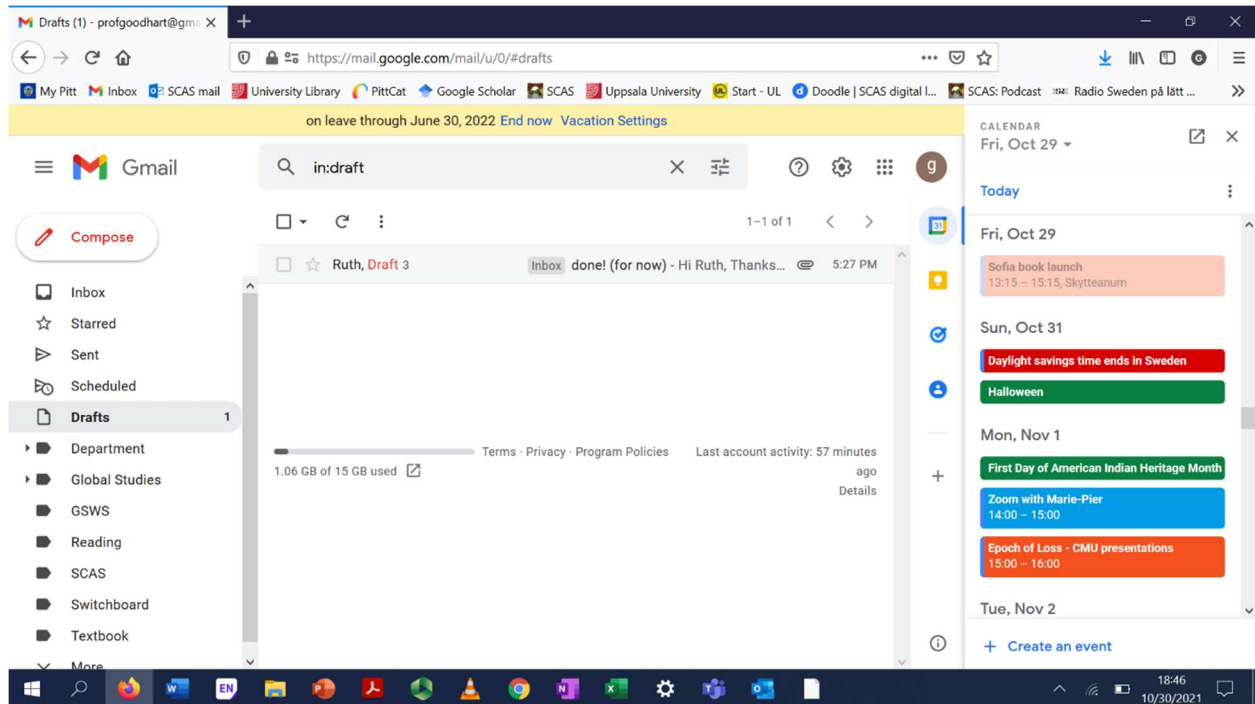
*(One thing we apparently disagree on is the appropriate spelling of flyer! I changed it back, out of habit; online sources vary, but most give flyer as the preferred spelling and flier as an alternative, while some say the former should be reserved for pamphlets and the latter for aviators. I really don't mind...).*

*If you are OK with my couple of edits, I think  
1) we're ready to go, and*



2) we don't need a Monday meeting.

*I too and super happy with how this has developed, and I feel like it's been not just a summing up but also a moving forward in many ways, a good exercising in thinking together across thousands of miles. So: YES.*



*I'm also attaching a cleaned up and formatted version of the Appendix, suitable for sharing as soon as you have the other doc ready to go. It's so up to the minute that it includes the text of this email, and a screenshot of it sitting in my drafts folder!*

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