

# CAORC Fellow

**Jeannie Sowers wins award for study of civilian infrastructure and war in the Middle East**

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Jeannie Sowers, associate professor of political science, has been awarded a Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) Multi-Country Fellowship for her ongoing work on civilian infrastructure and war in the Middle East. Sowers shares the award with Erika Weinthal of Duke University.

The CAORC award will enable Sowers and Weinthal to conduct additional field research for their current research project analyzing the direct and indirect impacts of targeting civilian infrastructure in Middle Eastern conflicts. Sowers says their research

draws on an original database built over two years tracking infrastructure targeting in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya and the Palestinian territories. “We document how infrastructure targeting undermines livelihoods, public health and ecosystems. We also explore the politics of rebuilding and reconstruction.”

CAORC funding will take them to Amman, Ramallah and East Jerusalem, where they’ll undertake document collection, archival research and interviews with humanitarian organizations, civil society, state agencies and international organizations working on essential infrastructure.

“We consider how these actors influence legal norms and practices dealing with human rights, humanitarian intervention and the environment,” Sowers says. “This is in light of escalating violations of international humanitarian law, which prohibits the deliberate targeting of objects essential to civilian life.”

Sowers’ most recent book is “Modern Egypt: What Everyone Needs to Know” (Oxford University Press, 2018), co-authored with Bruce Rutherford. Her book “Environmental Politics in Egypt: Experts, Activists, and the State” (Routledge, 2013) was awarded Runner-Up for the 2013 Harold and Margaret Sprout Award for the best book in international environmental politics by the International Studies Association.

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