

Notice of Doctoral Dissertation Examination

Jessica West

PhD in Global Governance

Defense in Depth: An Anatomy of Containment from Quarantine to Resilience

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1PM**

Balsillie School of
International Affairs
BSIA 1-23

Chair
Sapna Isotupa

Advisor
Simon Dalby

Committee
David Welch
Veronica Kitchen
Sara Matthews

External
David R. Mutimer
(York University)

This dissertation investigates the logic of resilience as a prevailing mode of national security. Struck more by its familiarity than its novelty, I turn my attention to public health as a way of better understanding what resilience does and how it works. Using interpretive methods to read resilience theoretically as a function of complex systems and concretely as a set of homeland security policy practices in the United States, I situate the emergence and implementation of resilience as a redeployment of long-standing motifs and modes of “containment,” recast as an immune system. Specifically, I claim: 1) containment is a spatial strategy of controlling contagion embedded in geopolitical and biological views of order and disorder; 2) this strategy shares a logic of national defense and public health; and 3) resilience represents a tactical shift in practices of containment in order to integrate expanding layers of the population into detection and control practices, both real-time and automated.

I pursue this argument through an anatomy of containment that examines both its structure and its parts. Section One follows the confluence of military and public health interventions to contain contagion through shifting images of the body politic, starting with quarantine and immunity-as-defense before turning to resilience as an immune system approach to body perceived as fluid and vulnerable. Section Two explores how containment functions. This includes surveillance to detect outbreaks of disease and disorder, hygiene measures to control responses to an outbreak and limit its spread, and how this process is

animated by the promotion of subjective identities in order to close the gap between individual bodies and a collective Self.

In many ways, we are still trying to practice quarantine. There are flaws in this strategy. While my analysis points to containment as a coherent strategy, it is continually fraught with tension between the geopolitical system and biological parts. This tension implies limitations on the ability to contain contagion and raises political and ethical questions about which bodies are protected, and the consequences of failure, which are obscured by the drive toward an automated and an increasingly uncontested vision of security.

Dissertation will be on deposit in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and available for perusal.