



SUMMER SCHOOL IN GLOBAL POLITICS, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY 2018

Resilience: Governance in an Uncertain World

Instructor: David Chandler (University of Westminster)

Date: June 25 - 27

Time: 9.00 am - 11.00 am

Room: 24.133 Fred Halliday - Mercè Rodoreda Building 24 (Floor 1)

Today's world, of complexity, interdependence and unexpected crises, is often seen to be ungovernable in traditional 'top-down' or 'command-and-control' ways. This course looks at the emergence of alternative, 'bottom-up' or immanent approaches to the problems of global politics, development and security; these new approaches are often grouped together under the rubric of 'resilience'. In three two-hour sessions, we will explore three ways of rethinking governance in discourses of resilience, relating to how we learn from the past, how we can be more responsive in the present and how we can speculatively enable alternative futures. The first approach understands governance as recursive, governing the effects of previous actions and their unseen or unintended consequences through mapping or tracing relations and path-dependencies. The second approach focuses on the capacity to see or to sense processes in their emergence, aspiring to increasingly real-time responsiveness, preventing crises through enabling effects to be mitigated or modulated, often through the use of new technologies such as Big Data and the Internet of Things. The third approach, increasingly recasts problems as opportunities for learning and experimentation, which we need to become attuned to, arguing that we should focus on governing or becoming-with other actors and agencies through practices of speculative engagement, enabling new possibilities to unfold.

Session 1. Iconic Resilience

In this first session we consider how resilience might be understood as a field through which problems of governance are renegotiated. Some of the resilience readings may seem rather technical, please bear in mind that we are only interested in drawing out the methodological implications. The Yarina piece (published a couple of months ago) serves as an introduction to the problems of resilience and perhaps potentials of resilience as a form of governmental power, posing 'engineering' resilience against 'critical' resilience. The Rist et al article is useful in drawing out a little more how this normative binary might work, what is wrong with 'coerced' resilience? In discourses of resilience more things become visible or are included, the 'externalities' or 'unintended consequences' of our actions. The world becomes richer and more differentiated, leading to non-linear understandings of causality. In this session, if we have time, I'd also like to go a little deeper into how resilience emerges as a more 'realistic' or 'immanent' approach to problem solving. Some ways in which this will be discussed include beginning to see problems as 'signs' or 'signals' of a deeper, more complex, reality that can no longer be dismissed or ignored; hence 'iconic' resilience: appearances signal the need to rethink accepted ways of governing.

Required reading:

Lizzie Yarina, 'Your Sea Wall Won't Save You: Negotiating rhetorics and imaginaries of climate resilience', *Places*, March 2018.

<https://placesjournal.org/article/your-sea-wall-wont-save-you/>

L Rist et al, 'Applying resilience thinking to production ecosystems', *Ecosphere* (open access) (2014)

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/ES13-00330.1/abstract>

Further reading:

Craig R. Allen and C. S. Holling, 'Novelty, Adaptive Capacity, and Resilience', *Ecology and Society*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2010) article 24 http://www.buyteknet.info/fileshare/data/analysis_lect/Resilience_Allen-Holling.pdf

David Chandler, *Ontopolitics in the Anthropocene*, chapter 2 'After Neoliberalism: Mapping Assemblages' PDF of the book will be provided

Session 2. Indexical Resilience

In this session we will recap and clarify any questions from the first session and move on to think beyond initial views of resilience, which operate through the introduction of differences that make differences in a more lively world. How can we begin to see the world as more lively and interactive? How can we bring these processes to the surface, to see problems in their emergence rather than reacting after they have already appeared? Indexical resilience does not merely rethink our relational practices but begins to see the world differently, appearances are not merely signs or signals that start a speculative process of rethinking but become more meaningful forms of representation. Appearances become signs, standing in for other things, for us: this process is often termed

'datafication'. For example, dangerous gases in coalmines can become visible through the introduction of a canary; magnetic fields become visible through a compass; temperature changes through a thermometer. The development of tools and technologies such as the Internet of Things and Big Data enable learning through indexical thought: through correlation rather than theories of causation. We will discuss the application of these approaches in relation to a range of problems from conflict to environmental disaster.

Required reading:

Kenneth Neil Cukier and Viktor Mayer-Schoenberger, 'The Rise of Big Data: How It's Changing the Way We Think About the World', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2013.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/system/files/pdf/articles/2013/92305.pdf>

Chris Anderson, 'The End of Theory: The Data Deluge Makes the Scientific Method Obsolete', *Wired Magazine* 16, no. 7, 23 June 2008.

<https://www.wired.com/2008/06/pb-theory/>

Evgeny Morozov, 'The Rise of Data and the Death of Politics', *The Observer*, 30 July 2014.

<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jul/20/rise-of-data-death-of-politics-evgeny-morozov-algorithmic-regulation>

Further reading:

David Chandler, 'A World without Causation: Big Data and the Coming of Age of Posthumanism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2015), special issue: 'Quo Vadis IR: Method, Methodology and Innovation', pp.833-851

<http://www.davidchandler.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Millennium-Big-Data-Posthuman-PUBLISHED2.pdf>

Elizabeth R. Johnson, 'At the Limits of Species Being: Sensing the Anthropocene', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 2 (2017) pp. 275-292.

<https://read.dukeupress.edu/south-atlantic-quarterly/article-abstract/116/2/275/3849/At-the-Limits-of-Species-Being-Sensing-the> or <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/23130/>

Session 3. Symbolic Resilience

In our concluding session we will recap some of the key points of the first two framings of resilience: both 'iconic' and 'indexical' resilience focus on adapting or modulating to mitigate or to prevent problems. Thus, they could be seen to be conservative, seeking to preserve the status quo or existing ways of being. We will then move on to discuss ways in which discourses of resilience have developed in more open, affirmative or future-oriented ways. As resilience-thinking becomes more at home with the end of modernist framings, uncertainty enables new ways of engaging with the world, based on an ontology of processes of emergence and becoming, rather than of causal relations between discrete entities. Perhaps this more affirmative discourse, of problems as opportunities for creativity and discovery and unfolding, could be understood as 'symbolic' resilience. Here the world is full of meaning, but meaning is independent from the human as subject, residing in the becoming of inter (or intra-) active, inter-species life. Perhaps it is no longer possible to talk about 'problem solving' when the cuts and separations between 'inside' and 'outside' are no longer clear. We will conclude with a discussion of what

might be at stake in imaginaries of a world without entities such as ‘subjects’ or ‘objects/ things’ and thus where modern constructions of governing agency no longer make sense.

Required reading:

Donna Haraway, ‘Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene: Donna Haraway in conversation with Martha Kenney’, from *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies* (eds) Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin

https://lasophielle.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/ab1cd-artanthro_haraway_proof.pdf

Invisible Committee, ‘fuck off, google’, excerpt from *To Our Friends* (2014)

<https://events.ccc.de/congress/2014/Fahrplan/system/attachments/2530/original/fuckoffgoogleeng.pdf>

Further reading:

David Chandler, ‘Intervention and Statebuilding beyond the Human: From the ‘Black Box’ to the ‘Great Outdoors’’, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2018), pp.80-97.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17502977.2017.1412108>

Scott F. Gilbert, Jan Sapp and Alfred I. Tauber, ‘A Symbiotic View of Life: We Have Never Been Individuals’, *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (December 2012), pp. 325-341.

<https://blogs.bu.edu/ait/files/2012/12/SymbioticViewQRB.pdf>