

Colleen Bell

The Freedom of Security: Governing Canada in the Age of Counter-Terrorism. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011. 216 pp.

In *The Freedom of Security: Governing Canada in the Age of Counter-Terrorism*, Colleen Bell explores the evolving relationship between freedom and security in Canada. Bell argues that the political elite manipulates Canadian ideals of freedom to exploit racist and xenophobic characteristics of Canadian society and produce selective legal civility. She employs a critical socio-legal analysis of Canada's governance and security discourses in a series of case studies that reflect three types of policy: domestic, foreign, and by proxy.

The first chapter of *The Freedom of Security* reviews, in a limited way, relevant theoretical works by Foucault and Agamben. Their work provides the theoretical basis for Bell's critique. This chapter may be daunting to the non-academic reader, but it is essential to the author's goal of exposing freedom and security as tools of oppression for politically undesirable segments of Canadian society. Bell is not simply critiquing the obvious jingoism that often goes hand in hand with patriotic notions of freedom and security. Rather, she is questioning the socio-legal purpose of this type of characterization of freedom and security for Canada nationally and internationally.

Bell begins her argument by looking at the socio-legal implications of "opting-in" (p. 23) to the War on Terrorism. Despite claiming that security was above politics, politicians used hyperbole to achieve political goals. Describing examples of political rhetoric, Bell concludes that liberal states, such as Canada, increasingly define their citizens' freedoms through exclusion rather than inclusion. In other words, liberal societies increasingly categorize those who challenge xenophobic ideals of legitimate citizenship as not deserving of the protections owed to all citizens.

Throughout the remainder of the book, Bell explores the implications of the new security paradigms. She discusses the use of security certificates in Canada as an internally focussed means of legally alienating racialized persons, particularly those whom the government finds inconvenient and undeserving of rule of law protections. Bell convincingly argues that the government has failed to apply an egalitarian view of legal protection when making decisions about security certificates.

Bell then presents the War in Afghanistan as an example of external marginalization. In her view, the mission in Afghanistan represents a trend in the quest for global security that blurs the lines between development, international aide, and warfare. Bell charges that the government has used the resulting approach to international security development, diplomacy, and defence to justify military expansion into the area of development.

Bell's final case study explores marginalization through proxy in the case of Abdullah Almalki. Syrian officials, who had intimate knowledge of Almalki's life in Canada, detained, tortured, and interrogated him from May 2002 until July 2004. Almalki and his supporters now believe that security officials in Canada had requested his detention. Bell uses the case to warn of the superficiality of the tether that links Canadians, especially racial minorities, to their rights.

Colleen Bell has put a great deal of academic and practical thought into *The Freedom of Security*. Her achievement, both noteworthy and recommendable, is, however, not without flaw. The case studies stand on their own merits, but readers may be left feeling as though they have read four independent works from the same theoretical perspective. Bell offers broad alternatives to neoliberal governance in the final case study that, in my view, she should have explored more thoroughly in other chapters. Doing so could have helped readers to draw all of the case studies together. Further, such an approach would have provided a more comprehensive argument for the alternative form of governance that Bell espouses.

Bell has also omitted some historical analysis that may have added complexity and context to her argument. I am left wondering how she compares the *War Measures Act* to the post-9/11 *Anti-Terrorism Act* in Canada. Does she see much of a difference between Soviet colonialism in Afghanistan and the NATO mission she critiques? If not, can she really say that mixing development with militarization is a new strategy? From a historical perspective, this book could spark a great deal of research, but in the meantime, it leaves the reader asking a lot of important questions relevant to its somewhat incomplete conclusion.

In the post-9/11 world, where security is a household topic and a political tool, insights that challenge hegemonic security discourse are important. In that sense, Bell has a remarkable achievement in *The Freedom of Security*. This well-written and important book will guide future critical research and thought in Canadian studies of freedom and security. Bell's argument, if considered seriously, could lead to the more egalitarian and balanced treatment of racial minorities in domestic and international policy.

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Emma Cunliffe

Murder, Medicine and Motherhood. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2011. 246 pp.

Murder, Medicine and Motherhood presents Emma Cunliffe's study of the trial of Kathleen Folbigg, an Australian woman found guilty of the separate deaths of her four infant children. Like many who write about wrongful convictions, Cunliffe offers insights on the rules of evidence and their truth-seeking limitations. More than that, however, she provides a careful interdisciplinary analysis that reveals how medicine, law, and media play a game of hot potato, shaped by normative conceptions of motherhood, to cope with, mask, and manipulate uncertainty in such cases. Through this creative use of the wrongful convictions frame, Cunliffe's