Introduction

Citizens are increasingly enjoined to occupy a central and active role in the national security architecture of Britain. In the 2008 National Security Strategy (NSS) the UK's then-Labour government stated its commitment to finding 'new opportunities to seek views from members of the public', which was presented as 'the next step in a process of engagement designed to ensure that government thinking on national security constantly keeps pace with the rapidly evolving global security environment' (Cabinet Office, 2008: 61). The Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government's 2010 NSS, entitled *A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty*, reiterated the 'need to build a much closer relationship between government, the private sector and the public when it comes to national security' and claimed that 'we all have a part to play in keeping the country safe – be it from terrorists, cyber attack or natural disasters' (Cabinet Office, 2010: 5). Continuing this familiar theme, the First Report of the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy (JCNSS) called for greater 'public engagement' in the formulation of national security policy ahead of the next NSS (JCNSS, 2015: 10).

Despite the centrality of the citizen in national security policy, however, successive governments have not sought actively to engage the views and experiences of diverse publics in the assessment and prioritisation of issues presented as security threats and risks (Hagmann and Dunn Cavelty, 2012; see also McCormack, 2015; Ritchie, 2011).[1] Indeed, Jonas Hagmann and Miriam Dunn Cavelty (2012: 87) argue that the purportedly 'scientific' assessment and presentation of issues in the NSS and accompanying National Risk Register (NRR) reflect a 'distinct security rationality that "depoliticises" security politics' (see also Leander, 2013). By prioritising issues according to their probability of occurrence and scale of impact at the national level, the NSS presents a seemingly neutral and value-free basis for determining national security policy – one that closes off 'debates about values, purposes, and formulations of security' (Hagmann and Dunn Cavelty, 2012: 87).

While the methodology underpinning the NSS and NRR may be read as part of a wider crisis of representation and legitimacy (McCormack, 2015: 2; see also Ritchie, 2011), there are nonetheless various government-backed initiatives designed to enlist the support of citizens throughout society in the risk management cycle (Jarvis and Lister, 2012). For example, posters and announcements in public spaces – such as those associated with the London Metropolitan Police's long-standing 'If you suspect it, report it' campaign – enjoin 'citizen-detectives' to be vigilant at all times and to report any behaviour that they deem to be 'suspicious' (Vaughan-Williams, 2008). At ports, airports, and international railway stations, a growing number of 'trusted' travellers are also expected to interact willingly with biometric technologies such as 'e-passports' and 'e-gates' in order to facilitate identity-based risk management and reduce waiting times (Amoore, 2009). In a similar vein, Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) invite individuals to feed into local community risk registers in order to identify the greatest risks in a given area and then help to plan and take part in exercises to mitigate against those risks (Adey and Anderson, 2011). Thus, in the 2011 *Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience*, citizens are called upon to 'look after themselves and each other for a period until any necessary external assistance can be provided' (Cabinet Office, 2011: 3).

Yet, despite the rhetoric of the NSS and burgeoning expectations that citizens should become stakeholders in and indeed agents of national security, still relatively little is known about *how* citizens conceptualise and experience 'threat' and '(in)security' in the context of their everyday lives, whether they are aware of, engage with, and/or refuse government attempts to enlist them in building societal resilience, and what the implications of these initiatives might be for social interaction among multiethnic publics. International Relations (IR) and Security Studies in both 'traditional' and 'critical' guises have for the most part privileged the rhetoric, speech acts, and (in)securitizing moves of politicians, policy-making communities, security professionals, private security companies, and other *elites* (Jarvis and Lister, 2015; McDonald, 2008). In the laudable attempt to make visible diverse governmental logics of (in)securitization, an unintended outcome of this scholarly focus is that the views, repertoires of knowledge, and testimonies of the political subject of (in)security have been rendered largely invisible (Booth, 2007; Gillespie and O' Loughlin, 2009a; Hansen, 2000; Jarvis and Lister, 2013; Wibben, 2011; see also Walker, 1997). More recently, as we will go on to discuss in Chapter 1, there have been efforts to address this analytical deficit in the context of two so-called 'turns' within the literature produced by the subfield of Critical Security Studies (CSS) in particular – 'the vernacular' and 'the everyday'.[2] However, these nascent bodies of work – and other related traditions such as standpoint feminist approaches – have developed largely separately from rather than in conversation with each other, which has both perpetuated existing blind spots

and also led to new ones – gaps that we wish to identify and start to address in this book.

A further lacuna in academic understanding of public perceptions and experiences of everyday security threats exists as a result of the absence of any serious engagement between the IR and Security Studies literature on the one hand and that in Political Psychology and Behaviour on the other. The most direct engagement with IR (e.g., McDermott, 2004) also has a strong focus on leadership, with a particular emphasis on explanations for (often defective) decision-making by elites, including theories of personality, analogical reasoning, groupthink and polythink, and prospect theory (Redd and Mintz, 2013), as well as the role of contextual factors like stress (Levi and Tetlock, 1980). When it comes to individual attitudes and opinion, political psychologists have been more interested in explaining manifestations of perceived security threats, such as group bias, obedience to authority, prejudice, and intolerance, than in perceptions of threats themselves (e.g., Kinder and Dale-Riddle, 2012; Marcus et al., 1995; Milgram, 1963; Stenner, 2005). When they have looked at perceptions of threats, for example from terrorism in the wake of 9/11, it has been of single salient threats rather than security threats writ large (Davis and Silver, 2004; Huddy et al., 2002). It would also be fair to say that research into political psychology and political behaviour tends not to focus directly on how individuals articulate threats as a source for understanding, preferring to draw inferences about understanding from techniques like varying frames or priming different identities. The aim of this book is to redress these lacunae in different subfields of the discipline, make them speak to each other, and in so doing gain a greater understanding of perceptions of security threats, with implications for elite understanding also, than either can accomplish on its own.

Terrorism, ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), migration, immigration, weak border control, Ebola, swine flu…if we were to examine the British public's perceptions of security threats at any time during 2005–16, these are the kinds of issues that we might expect to be uppermost in citizens' minds. After all, they have featured prominently in the news, in some cases they present threats that are mortal, and in others to livelihood, and they may result in the kinds of consequences that are of great concern to individuals. In November 2014, the UK government's Home Secretary Theresa May described the terrorist threat as greater than at any other time in the country's history. Indeed, Clarke et al. (2009) argue that the 'old issues' of the National Health Service and education have declined in importance in British politics, to be replaced by new security issues pertaining to crime, immigration, and terrorism (see also Whiteley, 2012; Whiteley et al., 2013). Similarly, according to Willer and Adams (2008: 3), while 'terrorism has become the most significant political issue of the past decade in the United States', other issues such as immigration, health pandemics like Ebola, and 'moral' issues such as same-sex marriage have at times also been at

the forefront of public consciousness. Some argue that perceptions of threat from changing lifestyles have contributed to a restructuring of American politics (Hetherington and Weiler, 2009).

It is not only these salient global and national level issues that may be perceived as security threats and that may influence political attitudes and behaviours. Other threats that are closer to home but that receive less attention – such as identity theft – may loom just as large, or larger, in citizens' everyday lives. At the same time, and as mentioned above, citizens in countries like Britain and the US have been given an unprecedented role in the exercise of security, as in campaigns such as 'If you suspect it, report it', a function both of new threats and, we are told, of state security apparatuses' inability to deal with them as they did with older threats, which is in turn a function of the threat and of austerity and the limits on the tools available. Thus, Mark Rowley, the UK police's chief counter-terrorism officer, said, 'the police "cannot succeed alone" in defeating the terror threat and that the public must be vigilant about reporting suspicious behaviour in their area' (in Mason, 2014).[3]

It is such perceptions of security threats, from terrorism to identity theft, and the politics of these dynamics at the level of the everyday that are the subject of this book. We explore the full range of issues that members of the British public perceive as threatening to the security of themselves, their community, the nation, and the globe. We ask whether individuals see more threats at some of these levels than at others, what those threats are, their individual-level origins, and also the effects they have 'downstream' such as on preferences for more spending that might mitigate security threats as opposed to more spending on other areas such as education.

The stakes in the answers to these questions about contemporary threat perceptions are high for governments and citizens alike. While liberal democracies attempt to 'balance' civil liberties and security, a threatened public skews the trade-off towards the latter, tending to favour repression, intolerance, and aggressive and exclusionist attitudes towards minorities, towards targets with different political ideologies, and to show a greater willingness to support war against external sources of threat (e.g., Burke et al., 2013; Motyl et al., 2010). A threatened public may also be more receptive to the enhancement of elite power to enact otherwise unpopular or illiberal policies (Bigo and Tsoukala, 2008; Chalk, 1998; Nacos et al., 2011). Indeed, the combination of threat and the belief that elites sanction punitive actions that combat threat is particularly dangerous to democracy. Instead of adapting levels of protection to the perceived existence of threats, it may lead to the modulation of threat perceptions in order to justify enhanced levels of protection, such that protection itself may become a threat (Esposito, 2011: 16). At the extremes, this can result in what Fromm (1941) referred to as 'an escape from freedom', which Heymann (1998) more recently described as the undermining of nations' democratic traditions, and to the

temptation to support 'highly charismatic leaders, such as Juan Peron and Adolf Hitler' (Merolla et al., 2007: 30).

Of course, when authors such as Clarke et al. (2009) refer to new security issues, much of the context is '9/11'. The events and aftermath of 9/11 have presented what some analysts consider to be a new world order in terms of threat perceptions: it has 'resulted in chronic changes to schematic representations of the social world as a dangerous and threatening place for many people' (Sibley et al., 2007: 368), giving a 'new urgency to understanding the degree, origins, nature and consequences' of threats (Huddy et al., 2002).[4] The securitization of migration and its increasing association with transnational crime and international terrorism – particularly, though not exclusively, in Europe and North America (Huysmans, 2006; Sniderman et al., 2004) – is just one example of '"new politics" and "new security" issues' since 9/11 (Lahav and Courtemanche, 2012; see also Brader et al., 2008).

Key themes and arguments

The central topic of the book – everyday perceptions and experiences of security threats among citizens – is among the most salient issues in contemporary politics, transnationally. It attracts significant government spending and animates national security policy, and yet academics and policy-makers alike admit to knowing very little about citizens' attitudes towards, and experiences of, security. Our book seeks to contribute to a small but expanding body of literature that addresses this pressing knowledge deficit.

We deliberately seek to bring different disciplinary perspectives and approaches to the subject-matter. We suggest that the complexity of the topic demands this kind of intellectual pluralism and therefore a certain degree of methodological pragmatism. Thus, we hope that the book demonstrates the enormous potential of this kind of collaboration, which remains unusual in the discipline of Political Science. Transgressing subdisciplinary boundaries means that we are able to cover more substantive ground than extant studies on the theme of security threat politics, which tend to adopt a single orientation and methodological approach and are therefore far more limited in scope and appeal. Indeed, our commitment is to methodological pluralism and a post-positivist epistemological stance beyond the tired and totalising dichotomy of 'quantitative' versus 'qualitative' perspectives. We argue that this distinction is ultimately unhelpful and that a more productive attitude is one driven by addressing substantive issues and problems in contemporary political life from a range of potentially apposite perspectives. By foregrounding theoretical and methodological challenges posed by the task of studying the politics of everyday perceptions and experiences of security threats, we insert our operating assumptions and their implications into the analysis rather than pretending that these can be ignored.

This ethos acknowledges the inability of any perspective to grasp fully the complexities of social realities and proceeds instead by rigorously exploring and evaluating the insights and limitations of various starting points by building self-reflexivity into the research design.

Aside from advancing understanding of everyday security threat politics, therefore, a key theme of this book is that of methodology and the practical challenges posed by our substantive topic. Studies on this topic in IR and Security Studies tend to refer to 'the public', 'citizens', and 'the everyday' without actually gathering significant bodies of original empirical evidence from these people or sites, or they tend to rely only on interview or focus group materials. This book, by contrast, combines qualitative and quantitative approaches and triangulates methods in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding of the relationship between public opinion and security threats. Studies on this topic in Political Psychology tend to focus on single threats, without having a broader perspective on threats in general. Again, this book examines multiple threats between and within subjects. We provide several new findings about how diverse multiethnic publics conceptualise, understand, and experience 'threat', 'security', and 'security threats' in their daily lives, and we examine the implications of these for an understanding of their origins and their consequences for a range of public attitudes.

Recent attempts to bring 'vernacular theorizing' (Bubandt, 2005; Gillespie, 2007; Gillespie and O'Loughlin, 2009a, 2009b; Gillespie et al., 2010; Jarvis and Lister, 2012, 2013, 2015) into the study of security have made significant inroads into addressing the otherwise elitist outlook of the sub-discipline – the excellent study by Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister (2015) is of particular significance for blazing this trail – and it is our hope to contribute to this burgeoning literature. However, the focus of these studies has been primarily on public attitudes towards the specific threat of terrorism, British anti-terrorism legislation, policy, and practice, and experiences of citizenship. By contrast, our study was explicitly designed to approach the question of citizens' attitudes towards and understandings of 'security' and 'security threats' from a purposely open and expansive perspective. As such, the range of issues often construed as security threats that we cover in this book includes not only terrorism but also economic security, Islamophobia, racism, and hate crime, to name only a few prominent examples.

In summary, this book provides new insights into everyday threat politics by focusing on: 1) the breadth of issues that members of the public identify as security threats – how many, and whether seeing one type of threat is associated with seeing others; 2) the extent to which perceptions of the breadth of threats vary as individuals move from global to personal security threats; 3) the individual-level influences on perceptions of the breadth of threats; and 4) the relationships between perceptions of threats and other political attitudes and

behaviours, such as attitudes towards minority groups and intention to vote in an election.

In so doing, we make several novel contributions to understanding. First, this is, to our knowledge, the first study to examine perceptions of the breadth of threats rather than specific threats and their intensity. We contend that it provides both a broadened understanding of how threatened citizens think they are, and also a deeper exploration of contemporary understandings of security threats than heretofore. Second, by not confining ourselves to specific threats, we are able to generalise about how individual-level variables, from mortality salience – both a greater awareness of one's own mortality and feelings of vulnerability – and authoritarianism to media habits, affect perceptions of the breadth of security threats and where and why there is variation. This provides a broader understanding of threats and a firmer foundation for understanding their origins. Third, we extend the levels at which threats are perceived from the national versus personal dichotomy that has dominated the literature to a continuum spanning the individual, family, community, nation, and globe, while also showing the extent to which perceptions of threat at each level have different causes. Fourth, we examine the effects that the breadth of threats at these different levels has on a range of political attitudes and behaviours. Previous research has speculated on why there is variation in such influence but has not examined the range of threats and outcomes that we do and that allow us to pinpoint the causes.

Outline and map of the book

The book is organised into five chapters. The first chapter explores existing insights into the question of what 'security threats' are and how we can study everyday perceptions and experiences of them. In the IR and Security Studies literature the study of the concept of threat has evolved from analyses of the security dilemma between states under anarchic conditions (Waltz, 1979) towards a view that threats are not automatically produced as a result of those conditions (Wendt, 1999). The impact of the social constructivist turn, alongside the broadening and deepening of the security agenda, has meant that threats are now widely seen as produced through dialogue and interaction between states and non-state actors alike. As a result, threats are said not to simply exist independently of our knowledge and representations of them. Rather, as typified by the work of the Copenhagen School, they are brought into being by processes of 'securitization' whereby a particular issue comes to be *framed* in terms of an existential threat in, for example, political speeches and media representations (Buzan et al., 1998). Thus, the concept of threat has been shown to depend on contingent factors such as intersubjective interaction between states (Wendt, 1999) and the (re)production of the identity of an individual state vis-à-vis other

states and discourses of 'dangerousness' as inherently political categories of understanding (Campbell, 1992). What has tended to be overlooked, however, is precisely the role of public opinion and everyday views, stories, and experiences in shaping securitizing moves and conditioning their ultimate success and/or failure (Balzacq, 2005, 2010 Eriksson, 2001; McDonald, 2008). This omission is also characteristic of approaches focusing on the relational economy of (in) securitizing moves (Bigo, 2008; Shapiro, 2013) and the affective politics of contemporary forms of neoliberal governmentality (Adey and Anderson, 2011, 2012; Massumi, 2005; see also Bröckling et al., 2010: 13). Political psychologists have conceived of threats as lying within two principal dichotomies: realistic versus symbolic threat and personal versus sociotropic threat. Realistic threat refers mainly to 'potential harm to tangible or concrete objects (e.g., money, land, human life), whereas symbolic threat includes various potential threats to relatively abstract aspects of the collective, such as threats to the in-group's identity, value system, belief system, or worldview (e.g., language, religion, morality)' (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2009: 464). The distinction between personal and sociotropic threat is between threat to the individual as opposed to threat to a collective such as one's community or nation. Thus, whereas for IR and Security Studies there has been a tendency to ignore the views of citizens altogether (Jarvis and Lister, 2012, 2013, 2015), we identify two main problems with psychological and behavioural analyses of threat: first, that research tends to focus on discrete security threats, such as from terrorism, immigration, or the environment – limiting understanding of threats in general – and, second, the predominant focus on threats at the national or personal level at the expense of other levels at which threats may be experienced, such as to the community in which a citizen lives.

In Chapter 2 we outline the 2012 study 'Public Perceptions of Threat in Britain', which we designed in order to address the gaps in the literature identified in Chapter 1, along with our approach to the analysis of data. Our methodology is anchored in a post-positivist derivative understanding of what security means; that is to say, we start from the operating assumption that there are multiple ways of conceiving what security 'is', each of which derives from particular worldviews (Krause and Williams, 1997). Hence, in order to study everyday threats to security, it is necessary to ask how different citizens and groups portray various issues as threatening – what devices they use to do this, why, and with what consequences for others. In this way, we did not begin with preestablished criteria about what counts as a security threat or what might be considered threatening to a given understanding of security. Rather, our use of the concept was immanent to the way in which participants in the fieldwork stages of the project understood the twinned concepts of 'security' and 'threat'. The programme of research adopted an unusual and innovative combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The optimal research design would

combine the richness and interactive dynamics of focus group research, the spontaneity and depth of individual semi-structured interviews, and a large sample survey to enable researchers to assess key relationships and subgroups statistically. Any one of these on its own is insufficient in view of the complexities of the research problem; our 2012 study incorporated each method in order to combine representative macro-level insights into public opinion across key variables, with non-representative micro-level thick descriptive accounts of individuals' everyday stories, experiences, and (de)constructions. We set out how we conducted an initial tranche of ten mini-focus groups, or 'triads', of three people each in conjunction with the social survey company TNS-BMRB in April 2012, in which we explored questions such as how participants conceptualise 'security' and 'security threat', the way that they think about different security threats in their daily lives, and whether they agree or disagree with and/or are affected by a range of government messages about security. The rationale for these small groups was to combine the kind of group interaction in traditional focus groups – for example, getting participants to work together on sorting different threats into categories based on what they regard as salient criteria and sharing their individual stories of (in)security – with the depth of insight that can be more easily obtained in individual interviews.

We used our observations of the mini-focus groups and analysis of the transcripts to reflexively inform the development of a twenty-five-minute online survey that was administered to 2,004 respondents from ICM's internet panel in June 2012 (ICM, a leading polling organisation in the UK, has a panel of roughly 100,000 respondents from which it samples for online surveys). This included a booster sample of 251 British Muslims. We were interested in Muslims as a subgroup that faces threats such as racism, Islamophobia, and hate crime, and is also regarded as uniquely threatening by members of other groups. We describe the sample we obtained, which, other than the booster, was representative of the British population on demographic criteria such as region and age. We also outline the questions we asked, and why, with a particular emphasis on our measurement of perceptions of twenty-two different security threats, which focused on breadth rather than intensity, and asked about threats at the world, national, community, and personal levels. We then conducted a second wave of ten mini-focus groups in September 2012, in which we concentrated on more specific areas of concern to us in the light of the first two stages of research – such as how citizens think and articulate specific security threats more than how they group different threats – and explored some of the themes emerging from initial analysis of the survey data.

The last part of the chapter discusses our approach to analysis. With the qualitative data, this is based on our observation of particularly salient and striking interchanges in groups, and also the organisation of the transcripts into recurring themes, i.e., how certain ideas, modes of communication, and cultural

devices for expressing understanding and marshalling evidence in support of individual views were repeated in different groups. Our method of presenting and analysing the views, anecdotes, and stories we co-produced proceeds largely through juxtaposition (Shapiro, 2013): by comparing and contrasting what different participants said (and did not say); and by setting these diverse opinions against the backdrop of dominant and otherwise homogenous (and elitist) national security frames. With the survey data, the analysis progresses from univariate statistics, through bivariate correlations and tables, to structural equation models in which we simultaneously estimate the influences on perceptions of threats and then the influence of threats on other variables such as spending preferences.

Chapter 3 brings together insights from our focus group and survey data in order to examine the scope of threats and their origins. We look at threats in two ways. We begin by summarising how participants in group discussions defined and understood the key concepts of 'security' and 'threat', the primary referent object that they invoked in doing so, and the vernacular methods of perception, measurement and categories of understanding drawn upon in response to open-ended questioning about what security means to them in the context of their everyday lives. Crucially, we show that a recurring scale of understanding consisting of four primary levels – namely, personal, community, national, and global – structured all of our group discussions of security threats in one way or another. We therefore focus on the breadth, or number, of security threats that individuals identified in total at the global, national, community, and personal levels. We show that on average our sample identified the most threats at the global and national levels – roughly seven and four respectively – with a drop when we moved to the community and personal levels, with roughly two. We examine what those threats were: issues like terrorism, religious extremism, and the economy at the global and national levels, immigration and crime at the community and individual levels, while the economic crisis was identified as a threat at all levels. We then explore the influences on the breadth of threats individuals identify, drawing on previous research to focus on the key dispositions of authoritarianism and mortality salience, media use, level of education, and race and religion. Chapter 2 includes a path diagram that depicts the model for the lay reader.

The second part of the chapter then focuses on specific threats that featured in discussions of security threats in the focus groups, the ones that were among the most salient threats identified by survey respondents and that vary in their characteristics, such as symbolic versus realistic, or physical versus economic threats. We concentrate on perceptions of threats from terrorism, immigration, the economy, and the environment and their origins, hypothesising which threats and at which levels we would expect to see variation. Among the findings of this chapter is that mortality salience and authoritarian attitudes are particularly

strong predictors of the number of threats that individuals identify and of the identification of specific threats such as terrorism and immigration. However, our analysis clarifies the nature of that influence. For example, mortality salience is a powerful influence on the perception of threats at the global and national levels, especially where the dangers are physical (terrorism) or pertain to identity and labour competition (immigration), but mortality salience has no influence on perceptions of community- or personal-level threats. Authoritarianism, on the other hand, is strongly related to heightened perceptions of threat from terrorism and immigration at all levels, but *negatively* related to seeing the economic crisis or environmental degradation as threats. Thus, this chapter debunks previous claims that there are few systematic influences on threats, and it goes further in clarifying the variation in the origins of different threats at different levels. It demonstrates that perceptions of threat are the result of the interaction of the characteristics of the threats themselves – e.g., physical versus symbolic threat – with characteristics of individuals.

From here Chapter 4 pertains to the consequences of identifying both more or fewer security threats, and also specific security threats such as from immigration, for other political attitudes and behaviours. Previous research has examined several consequences, from whether or not an individual votes and for whom they vote, to attitudes towards minorities or preferences for specific counter-terrorism policies. But these have generally been explored in isolation – single dependent variables or with respect to single threats – rather than by looking at threats writ large as we do here. Using the survey data, we look at the effects of the breadth of global, national, community, and individual threats identified, and then with respect to specific security threats individuals identify from terrorism, immigration, the economy, and the environment, on voting behaviour, attitudes towards immigrants and minorities, and policy preferences. The methodological approach is an extension of the structural equation models used in the previous chapter. Among the findings are that voting is unique in that only global and national considerations appear influential – thus the fact that it is often the focus of studies of, for example, economic threat is misleading. We also demonstrate and explain differences in the effects of threats such as terrorism and immigration from the economy and the environment.

Chapter 5 takes as its starting point the various ways in which elite responses to security threats such as the NSS both summarise government perceptions of the most salient threats and are also intended to send messages to the public and shape their behaviour, perhaps directly – individuals encounter messages on public transport and have leaflets posted through their doors – but also indirectly via the media. For example, a search of Nexis UK shows that the terms 'National Security Strategy' or 'security policy' appeared more than fifty times in the *Daily Telegraph* between the formation of the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government in May 2010 and June 2012, when our survey was in

the field, i.e., about twice a month. We probed awareness and perceptions of the NSS and other government messages about security in our focus groups and survey. This allowed us to examine three dimensions of the relationship between elite and non-elite perceptions and experiences of security threat politics: 1) the extent to which the British public are aware of the NSS or of other government messages and efforts to mitigate security concerns; 2) whether such awareness is associated with heightened or reduced levels of threat perception; and 3) what citizens think of such messages, whether they feel that their behaviour has been affected as a result, and how they express their knowledge and experience of being enlisted as 'citizen-detectives' in public spaces in particular (Vaughan-Williams, 2008). The focus groups attempted to find out how participants viewed government messages and whether they thought that these altered their everyday behaviour or that of others in society. Discussions were animated by a range of stimuli such as pen portraits of various fictional characters faced with decisions about how to behave in specific circumstances. Other group stimulus material included a 2004 booklet distributed to all UK households by the government called 'Preparing for an emergency', a 2006 poster from the London Metropolitan Police's 'You are that someone' anti-terrorism campaign, and a radio advert from the same campaign about being prepared on the city's transport network. Participants were asked about their awareness of these various campaigns, whether or not they felt these initiatives were effective in changing their behaviour and that of the public more generally, and if they had any suggestions about how security-related communication of this nature could be changed in the future. By investigating narratives of, inter alia, threat, safety, and belonging, the analysis considers how it might be possible to study the politics of (in)security from the perspective of subjects produced by those apparatuses of security. The various stories people tell – of economic insecurities, fear of crime, and Islamophobia – problematise the narrow and homogenising imperatives of the NSSs, and open up alternative narratives about identity, border-production, and multiple overlapping (in)securities. We argue that everyday attitudes towards and stories of (in)security offer a powerful counter-archive to the dominant national frame. While many of the views, anecdotes, and stories reproduce dominant governmental logics, it is also possible to identify political discourses that challenge these logics, repoliticise the grounds on which national security agendas are authorised, and reveal actually existing alternatives to cultures of suspicion and unease.

In the survey we asked about awareness of any government security strategies or programmes (and what they were) and then about the NSS in particular. Awareness of any government security programme and of the NSS is low, about 10 per cent of the sample for each, with surprisingly little overlap between the two: fewer than half the respondents who said that they had heard of a government security programme also said that they had heard of the NSS. Beyond

awareness per se we examine the relationship between awareness of government security strategies and perceptions of threat. There are obvious endogeneity problems here, so we are not claiming there is a causal relationship, but it is nevertheless striking that awareness of government strategies for security is associated with perceptions of more threats. We also look to see whether awareness is associated with perceptions of fewer threats in the future, but there too the association is with more threats. We then repeat the analysis but focus on British Muslims in particular, showing that these relationships are often stronger, which reinforces the evidence from the focus groups that contemporary security policy appears to intensify Muslims' fear that they are objects of suspicion. We end the chapter by discussing the implications of our qualitative and quantitative data for government messages about security.

Finally, the Conclusion sums up the research, explores its implications, and draws lessons for the future for both academic and policy-making communities. The implications of the research are several, spanning: government and its understandings of how the public views security threats and how the public perceives, experiences, and responds to messages about security threats; academic research in IR and Security Studies and how it conceives of public opinion and the role of the citizen in the risk management cycle; and academic research in Political Psychology and its understandings of the origins and consequences of threat perceptions.

Notes

1 While the 2010 NSS used the language of 'risk' more so than the 1998 NSS, the former continued to mobilise the concepts of 'risk' and 'threat' interchangeably; for a useful genealogical analysis of the deployment of these terms in the context of UK national security policy see Hammerstad and Boas (2015: 480-2).

2 Here and throughout the book we refer to the field of Critical Security Studies in the expansive sense as paradigmatically outlined by Krause and Williams (1997) – see also Peoples and Vaughan-Williams (2014).

3 In R. Mason,'Britain will be at heightened risk of terrorism for years, says police chief', *Guardian*, 24 November 2014.

4 For a critical commentary on the chronopolitics of 9/11 and the discourse of beginnings and endings see Closs Stephens and Vaughan-Williams (2008).