"Counterterrorism Citizens" and the Neurotic City

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■ **ABSTRACT:** An array of methods are used in European cities to respond to terrorism, with counterterrorism infrastructures in the built environment receiving particular academic interest. Yet the significance of imaginations of city spaces are often overlooked in studies of counterterrorism planning. Counterterrorism workshops influence imaginations of urban spaces by encouraging participants to adopt an anticipatory security gaze. This article explores the spatial approach of workshops, which require participants to interpret cities as a series of spaces and locations that could be terror targets. This article proposes that encouraging imaginations of danger in urban spaces can evoke fear, itself an aim of terrorism, or even neurosis, which becomes spatially attached to urban spaces as a means of urban counterterrorism governance.

■ **KEYWORDS:** counterterrorism, counterterrorism training, urban preparedness, urban terrorism

Recurrent terror attacks in European cities since 2015 have heightened the awareness that many urban spaces may be terror targets. In response to the increased frequency of terrorism during this period, national and local governments, as well as police and security agencies, have sought to enhance the "resilience" of cities, by preparing urban spaces in ways that could minimize the effects of potential terror attacks. This includes the increased use of counterterrorism training workshops, not only for those who work in public spaces but also for the general public. There is much attention to how urban landscapes become "prepared" through the use of security architectures and enhanced policing, yet how imaginations of urban spaces attempt to prepare actors in the city for a potential terror attack are often overlooked.

A distinct urban pedagogy facilitates the deployment of particular spatial imaginaries in which workshop participants are required to hypothesize a pre-criminal space (Strausz and Heath-Kelly 2019). Counterterrorism architectures, such as bollards, barriers, and modified road layouts, which are increasingly prevalent in European cities, are usually managed by private security firms or municipalities while the layperson holds no responsibility for their use, location, or consequences. Meanwhile, counterterrorism training, which is increasingly used in the UK, relies on a process of "responsibilising" (Coaffee 2013) members of the public toward counterterrorism objectives. This article explores how, and with what consequences, counterterrorism training embeds terrorism as a near-constant spatial imaginary in cities. This article argues that counterterrorism workshops, although temporally limited events, can have implications for spatial imaginaries and, thus, urban life in the long term.

This research is primarily informed by attendance at counterterrorism training workshops provided by the National Counterterrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), a police unit that is

funded by the UK Home Office. NaCTSO, which was created in 2002, raises awareness of the terrorist threat and suggests “measures that can be taken to reduce risks and mitigate the effects of an attack” (NaCTSO 2012: 52). This national scheme implicates the local level through Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSAs) who work with police forces across the country, including in the delivery of counterterrorism training workshops: Project Griffin and Project Argus. These workshops, in addition to online modules in the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) scheme, respond to the purported terrorist threat by teaching members of the public techniques toward the goal of enhancing urban counterterrorism security.

The first section outlines the terrorism context in Europe, which is often cited in attempts to justify enhanced counterterrorism responses. The second section explores conceptual issues relating to terrorism, fear, danger, and security. The third section discusses the integral role of the concept of preparedness in counterterrorism strategies, and the fourth outlines the methodology and features of counterterrorism workshops. The fifth, sixth, and seventh sections address how counterterrorism training workshops present spatial imaginaries of an allegedly inevitable terror threat.

Terrorism in European Cities

Terrorism in Europe since 2015 has been described as “a wave of terror” (Cendrowicz 2015; Klausen 2018) and “a jihadi terrorism crisis” (Hegghammer 2016). Between January 2015 and December 2018, 1,102 attacks in Western Europe caused 402 victim fatalities¹ (START 2019). Terrorism is now a key concern for citizens across Europe, being cited as a major source of anxiety in major public surveys (European Commission 2016). However, while the fatalities and physical and psychological harm caused by repeated terrorist violence should not be understated, Europe’s recent experience of terrorism is not exceptional. Attacks have been less frequent than in some other countries, particularly in Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Meanwhile, historical analysis indicates that recent attacks do not exceed previous experiences of terrorism in Europe in terms of frequency of attacks or number of victims. In the UK, terrorism fatalities in 2017, the year in which the country experienced the most attacks (nine) amid the recent wave of terrorism, were lower than those caused by the attacks in London on 7 July 2007 (herein, 7/7) alone and during 1972—which had the highest death toll of any year during The Troubles—in which 470 people were killed.

Moreover, statistics suggest that the chance of an individual being killed or injured in a terror attack is low compared to other causes of death (Nowrasteh 2017). Despite this relatively low probability, the public is repeatedly informed, by media and government sources, that “terrorism poses a unique and far graver threat than other threats” (Wolfendale 2007: 76) which could harm not only human lives, but also property, the economy, the environment and the values of freedom and democracy. Moreover, although the number of terrorist attacks in the UK has fallen since 2017, police statements insist that the terrorism threat has not abated. For example, as of March 2021, the MI5 website claims that “terrorism is the biggest national security threat that the UK currently faces” (MI5 n.d.). Meanwhile, a 2021 UK government security review suggested that a terrorist group could launch a successful chemical weapons attack in the UK by 2030 (HM Government 2021), thereby implying that terrorism in the UK could become more destructive in the coming decade. Such alarmist forecasts, though I do not dispute their credibility, enable authorities to justify the apparent need for an enhanced counterterrorism response.

Notwithstanding the politicization of recent terrorism, qualitative changes in the nature of terrorism do pose new challenges. Terror attacks have targeted a wider array of city spaces while

the underlying grievances of terrorists are in constant flux due to the reciprocity between Islamist and far-right extremisms, which show signs of amplifying one another (Eatwell 2006). Attacks have emerged across an array of urban spaces used in everyday life, including markets, high streets, bridges, concerts, supermarkets, and conferences, particularly after an ISIS spokesperson encouraged followers to “stop looking for specific targets. Hit everyone and everything” (quoted in Callimachi et al. 2017). Recognizing these locational shifts to more quotidian spaces, “accentuate[s] the mundane rather than the spectacular” (Crawford and Hutchinson 2016: 1189) nature of recent terrorism to highlight that it is no longer a phenomenon that only targets specific high-profile spaces, but could occur anywhere in the city. These locational shifts, alongside the increasing use of “low-tech” weaponry and attacks conducted by “lone actors,” contributes to warnings that terrorism is increasingly elusive, and therefore, possible in an array of urban spaces. Conventional counterterrorism tools are perceived to be increasingly outdated for this ongoing evolution of terrorist sources and manifestations.

Terrorism, Security, and Cities

Counterterrorism training encourages preparedness to provide security in response to the fear of terrorism dangers. The concepts of security, fear, and danger are often uncritically assumed so this section provides a brief overview of these concepts alongside those of resilience and preparedness.

Primarily, fear and uncertainty amongst a community are primary objectives of the terrorist (Wardlaw 1982: 16). Though terrorism is driven by underlying political motives, such as religious fundamentalism or anti-immigration sentiments, it is fear that serves as the terrorist’s tool to broadcast their political goals. Media coverage that accompanies terror attacks serves to publicize the associated political causes to a wide audience (Wilkinson 1997), which can create fear among the broader community that the terrorist seeks to intimidate by generating perceptions of existential vulnerability. The philosopher Brian Massumi captures the significance of imagination in the creation of fear, arguing that irrespective of whether “the danger was existent or not, the menace was felt in the form of fear” (2010: 53–54). The future-oriented nature of these imaginations indicates that imagining potential terrorism may create fear.

The role of imagination in establishing awareness of terrorism suggests that critical analysis is needed of how terrorism is communicated to the public. Research into the social construction of danger indicates that discursive work is needed to establish terrorism as a threat. David Campbell insists that “not all risks are interpreted as dangers” (1998: 349) to highlight that external factors contribute to the classification of risks, while Richard Jackson reminds us that language, in particular, served to “rationalise, legitimise and normalise” (2005: 20) the “War on Terror” after 9/11. For Jackson, portraying force as necessary aroused public emotions to increase public support for the War on Terror (2005: 24). Linguistic and rhetorical devices are thus crucial in defining and communicating risks, while also a means to acquire public support for responding to these apparent risks.

Terrorism is frequently portrayed as a security issue, yet the concept of security is notoriously understudied (Buzan 1983: 3; Waldron 2006). Attempts to conceptualize security often cast it in negative terms, in that security can only be ensured when there is an absence of threat to life or “acquired values” (Wolfers 1952: 485). Awareness of security is particularly acute in cities in which the emergence of the “securopolis,” referring to the combination of increased surveillance and demand for urban “resilience,” can increasingly alter affective perceptions of the landscape and one’s position within it (Rogers 2018).

Since the 1980s, there has been an expansion in security studies away from the predominant focus on state security to also encompass the security of people (Waever 1995). Meanwhile, the destruction caused by 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina renewed attention to city-scale security. As it was architectural elements that contributed to the damage of these events, there was a particularly renewed focus on the potential dangers of the built environment. However, urban risks have changed since the early 2000s, as highlighted by the changing *modus operandi* of terrorists. Although histories of urban warfare mean that cities are bound up with military logics to ensure security from external attacks (Graham 2014), the "home-grown" nature of many recent terrorists, who have either been born in Europe or hold European citizenship, ensures that the terror threat is no longer external. Traditional military responses to secure urban spaces against external threats do not protect cities against internal threats in the same way. Terrorism now often derives from within the city, which encourages the development of new strategies and techniques to secure cities.

The destruction caused by 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina also drew attention to the concept of "urban resilience" (Coaffee et al. 2009), referring to a city that is "capable of withstanding severe shock without either immediate chaos or permanent harm" (Godschalk 2003: 136). Instrumentalist or "classical" (Chandler 2014: 6) views of resilience capture the development of mechanisms that provide some capacity to "bounce back" (Meerow et al. 2016) after a disruption. This has encouraged top-down policies focused on socio-ecological systems, including those that address the implications of climate change, natural hazards, and energy systems. The prominence of resilience-thinking highlights that urban security, especially in British and US cities, is increasingly predicated on "preparedness," referring to efforts to establish mechanisms to effectively respond should future difficulties arise (Godschalk 1991: 136). Preparedness is underpinned by the belief that hazards cannot be eliminated (Anderson 2010), only mitigated through planning before hazards appear.

The concept of resilience is heavily debated, with increasing calls to move beyond classical understandings of resilience to problematize the concept and highlight theoretical problems (e.g., Reghezza-Zitt et al. 2012). Julian Reid's (2012) discussion of the use of resilience in the sustainable development sector highlights potential political implications. For Reid, an individual who must make "adjustments . . . which enable it to survive the hazards encountered in its exposure to the world" (2012: 74) is no longer "a political subject which can conceive of changing the world . . . but a subject which accepts the disastrousness of the world it lives in" (2012: 74). This suggests that citizens may not thoroughly question strategies that purport to enhance resilience, which raises questions about democratic participation. Meanwhile, "post-classical" understandings of resilience have moved beyond understanding resilience as capacity-building to suggest an adaptive process in which how one adapts "shapes the context in which our ongoing adaption will take place" (Chandler 2014: 7). This conceptual critique is important as it highlights the need to consider how measures that seek to enhance urban resilience may implicate the social and spatial contexts in which they arise.

Urban and architectural theory has often approached the security of cities as an issue centered around physical infrastructures. The focus on crime prevention through urban design (Newman 1972) in the 1970s drew attention to security measures that are used in urban spaces to deter activity by those within the city, not merely to deter external attacks. In the twenty-first century, terrorism has been cited as a reason for the ever-expanding militarization of urban landscapes (Coaffee 2017) resulting in semi-permanent concrete barriers and gates alongside enhanced private and military surveillance of high streets, transport networks, and sites of public interest. Counterterrorism infrastructures increasingly pervade even the smallest scales of urban life (Coaffee and Wood 2006), raising concerns about the implications for urban democ-

racy (Marcuse 2002; Savitch 2008), community interaction (Coward 2018), and individual psychology (Sullivan and Elkus 2009).

However, urban counterterrorism security extends beyond physical infrastructures. Stephen Graham proposes that the many ways cities are imbued with counterterrorism measures, particularly after 9/11, including vague warnings, media coverage, and color-coded alerts, can produce “permanent anxiety around everyday urban spaces” (2006: 261). Meanwhile, Jon Coaffee and David Murakami Wood discuss the increasing pervasiveness of urban security with measures introduced at institutional and national scales now accompanied by measures in the “civic, urban, domestic and personal realms” (2006: 504). This points to the increased participation of actors beyond the state, police or military towards urban counterterrorism objectives. Indeed, research points to the need to acknowledge the potential political consequences of smaller-scale, seemingly mundane, perhaps banal, urban features. Political geographers highlight the need to attend to “everyday geopolitics” (Dittmer and Gray 2010). For example, in her discussion of conflict in Beirut, Sara Fregonese highlights the need to explore “the deployment of material artifacts that regulate everyday spatial relations in the city” (2017: 494). Thus, further investigation is needed into the intricate ways that terrorism, and subsequent attempts to respond to terrorism, can implicate small-scale aspects of city life.

Prepared Cities

The relationship between fear and terrorism is widely recognized, but much research also points to the role of fear in governance, citizen behavior, and preparedness planning. Fear relies on imagining potential outcomes, which can motivate individuals to behave cautiously. François Ewald proposes the “precautionary principle” to capture the anticipatory approach that requires us to “imagine the worst possible” (2002: 64). Precaution assumes that there is a risk that is “neither measurable nor assessable” (2002: 63) so actions must be taken on conditions of “doubt, suspicion, premonition, foreboding, defiance, mistrust, fear, and anxiety” (2002: 73). The anticipation of danger is, therefore, central to precautionary planning.

Caution can also influence governance, in that management strategies rely on anticipating potential problems to prepare precautions based on uncertainty. Engin Isin argues that contemporary societies are governed “through neurosis” (2004: 217)—governments seek to govern through risk, rather than eliminate it. This creates a “neurotic citizen” who responds to anxieties and uncertainties rather than acting rationally. The neurotic citizen, argues Isin, is required to “make social and cultural investments to eliminate various dangers by calibrating its conduct on the basis of its anxieties and insecurities” (2004: 223). Isin provides the example of the communication domain in which people are depicted as individual nodes within a network. In this metaphor, “healthy functioning requires that each body on the network is also healthy and does not transmit viruses, spam and other impurities,” so “each body in the network has to be kept to certain standards” (2004: 229). Each body is motivated to uphold these standards through constant reminders that threat is imminent. This results in a “neurotic citizen” who wants “the impossible. It wants absolute security” (2004: 232). Thus, creating awareness of imminent danger can result in neurosis and fear.

However, dangers are not an inevitable threat. Rather, ideas of threat are constructed through representations (de Goede and Randalls 2009). The term “securitization” informs how discursive work establishes terrorism as a risk for cities, holding that “security” is a “speech act” (Waever 1995). Labeling something a security concern establishes it “as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure”

(1995: 23–24). Though terrorism does present risks for cities, securitization research indicates that the process of communicating terrorism to the public has an important role in establishing the nature and extent of these risks in public imaginations.

This points to the role of imaginaries in issues of urban security. On the urban scale, preparedness planning relies on imaginations of city spaces, which is highlighted by Stephen J. Collier and Andrew Lakoff's (2008) discussion of "vulnerability mapping" in US cities during the Cold War. These cartographical exercises require "the development of a new form of knowledge about urban life" (2008: 17), which entailed "imaginative enactment to generate knowledge about events . . . whose likelihood could not be known" (2008: 17). Mapping areas that were perceived to be vulnerable to possible nuclear attack, the proximity between locations and possible evacuation routes thus relied on spatial imaginaries to develop preparedness strategies in case US cities were to be targeted by the Eastern Bloc.

Counterterrorism planning similarly embraces preparatory logics, as is most explicit in the "preparedness" component of the UK's four-strand counterterrorism policy, known as CONTEST. However, preparatory logics also expand into broader counterterrorism practices, with "what if?" (Frank 2015) imaginaries pervading counterterrorism discourse. Like the consequences of urban preparedness more broadly, this temporal shift requires possible future terrorism to be introduced into the present to highlight current vulnerabilities (Lakoff 2007). While preparedness recognizes futurity, spatial aspects are often overlooked. A welcome exception to this temporal focus is the work of Claudia Aradau and Rens van Munster, who foreground the spaces of counterterrorism, proposing that "preparedness exercises . . . reframe the unknown, uncertain, and unknowable future into 'thinkable' materialities of space" (2012: 102). This recognition of spatiality that supplements the temporal focus of discussions of preparedness but must be pushed further. Urban spaces are not merely containers that absorb counterterrorism logics. Rather, space is complex, has consequences for human bodies, and interweaves with quotidian dimensions of urban life.

UK counterterrorism planning is not conducted exclusively by government officials, police or military as there is now reliance on co-opting members of the public to partake in "security coproduction" (Parker et al. 2019). Indeed, counterterrorism detectives have declared that "it's absolutely crucial that the public are out there helping us because we couldn't work without them" (Sky News 2016). The UK's emphasis on counterterrorism education has been resisted in other countries due to fears that public campaigns may scare the public (Parker et al. 2019), indicating that there is awareness among some state agencies of what this article seeks to explore: the potential implications of counterterrorism training. Political geographers have raised concerns about the potential implications of instilling an awareness of terrorism, due to potential discriminatory racial and ethnic profiling (Amoore 2007). Meanwhile, Nick Vaughan-Williams argues that encouraging members of the public to participate in counterterrorism efforts creates a "citizen detective" to constantly "look-out for 'suspicious' or 'risky' subjects" (2008: 64). By encouraging the public to detect risk, "the central dynamics of the war on terror . . . is played out . . . in everyday life" (2008: 64). Therefore, there is awareness of how counterterrorism training can adjust perceptions of other bodies. However, it is perceptions of city spaces to which this research attends.

Counterterrorism Workshops

This research is informed by attendance at four half-day workshops delivered by the City of London Police, which were attended in person: Project Argus in April 2017 and June 2018, and

Project Griffin in April 2017 and July 2018. I attended the workshops just as the other participants, including watching videos and slides and partaking in decision-making exercises, but I informed those at my table that I was undertaking research and gained their permission to observe their interactions. They were assured that while they would not be identified, their reactions and informal conversations may (anonymously) inform my work. I also had permission from workshop leaders, who were briefed about my research interests, to attend the sessions and a CTSA later answered my many questions in an interview. I also interviewed the security team of a Central London museum and participated in an online ACT course. Focusing on these less spectacular aspects of security provides insight into the “materialism of security” (Adey and Anderson 2012), which refers to the materials that compose security efforts. As Peter Adey and Ben Anderson (2012) attest, the materials of security enable extensive security apparatuses to function. These materials thus require sustained attention, to gauge a better understanding of the complexities of these apparatuses.

Project Argus and Project Griffin were national counterterrorism initiatives designed and managed by NaCTSO and delivered at local police stations, but also sometimes “in-house” following the launch of “bespoke,” “self-delivery” sessions in 2016 (City Security 2018). This research focuses on workshops delivered in “official” spaces, at local police stations. Project Argus, released in 2007, was a half-day, interactive exercise initiative to assist those working in crowded places in “preventing, handling and recovering from a terrorist attack” (North Yorkshire Police 2018). This initiative targeted senior managers, security officers, and front-of-house staff, as well as those involved with incident planning departments of hospitals, shops, offices, schools, and places of public interest, rather than the public more broadly. Argus was later developed to provide specialist sessions for specific business sectors, including the night-time economy, hotels, and education. For James A. Malcolm, Argus sought “to foster increased resilience” (2013: 311) by creating the “resilient citizen” who can enact an institutionalized “resilience agenda.” He proposes that Argus seeks to train members of the public “who work in . . . a perceived vulnerable space” to be able “to handle emergencies more effectively” (2013: 311). Meanwhile, Project Griffin, launched in 2004, provided counterterrorism “awareness days,” which are briefing events in which participants are taught how to report suspicious activity. Unlike Argus, Project Griffin also targeted members of the public (2013: 315). Awareness days were delivered by police advisors who discussed “the current threat,” “hostile reconnaissance,” and day-to-day security challenges. Crucially, both Argus and Griffin workshops emphasized the urban scale, depicting workshops as training “to protect our cities and communities from the threat of terrorism” (NaCTSO 2016).

The ACT program, launched in April 2018, has since replaced Project Argus and Griffin. ACT, which is also managed by NaCTSO, is intended to provide an overarching mandate to organize counterterrorism communication in the UK. ACT’s main feature is a free, 45-minute online training program composed of seven online modules. Despite the new name, much of the content remains similar to information delivered at Argus and Griffin workshops. The online training begins with a clip in which the former head of MI5, Andrew Parker, outlined the apparent terrorist threat in the UK, and viewers are shown clips from news footage of the aftermath of terror attacks in Finsbury Park, London Bridge, and Manchester Arena. This most recent variant of NaCTSO’s counterterrorism training focuses particularly on the everyday actions of the public, with participants told: “Action Counters Terrorism so make yours count.” ACT explicitly emphasizes the role of the public in identifying terror threats and pushes further than other campaigns in encouraging “communities to act on their instincts” (NaCTSO 2017). ACT training also has a wide reach, attracting over 400,000 participants (NaCTSO 2020a) within its first two years. While police rehearsals and training mechanisms strengthening police capacity

in case of a terror attack (Krasmann and Hentschel 2019) are expected procedures, the incorporation of members of the public into the counterterrorism response through Argus, Griffin, and ACT programs engage a broader range of urban actors in counterterrorism logics.

The Spaces of Urban Terrorism

The urban spaces of terrorism implicated by counterterrorism training begin with the spaces in which workshops are delivered. Though some Project Argus and Griffin workshops are "self-delivered" in places of work, this research focuses on those held in police stations. At the Project Argus and Griffin workshops I attended at the City of London Police Station, a sense of formality was reinforced by bodily and material interactions. Mandatory ID checks on arrival and a police escort from reception to the room in which the workshop was held may be sensible given the security risks of public access within a police station, but also controlled the movement of participants within the building. In the workshop room, the wooden floors, stage, pull-down slideshow screen, and large windows running the lengths of two opposite walls were reminiscent of an assembly hall in a British school, perhaps creating a spatial familiarity for some participants. Otherwise, this is a distinctly official space, which was reinforced by sounds of police car sirens and clattering hoofs of police horses outside, alongside roaming, though friendly, uniformed police officers. At the Project Argus workshops, seven chairs were arranged around each table to foster group discussion, while at the Project Griffin workshops, eight rows of seating, separated by a central aisle, reflects the session's question and answer form of delivery.

Meanwhile, the expansion of counterterrorism training through the ACT program, the implications of which will be discussed in detail in a later section, allows counterterrorism to seep into domestic spaces. The ACT program is available online to the general public, with registration for online modules, including those that provide information on identifying "security vulnerabilities," "suspicious behavior," and "what to do in the event of a bomb threat," taking less than an hour. ACT is therefore available remotely, without having to attend a training workshop delivered at a local police station or one's workplace. The release of the ACT mobile phone app in March 2020 expands this further, so that users can now be constantly updated with real-time updates from NaCTSO, and the app is advertised as being "available at your fingertips 24/7—wherever you are" (NaCTSO 2020b). Given the increasing presence of mobile phones in daily life, this development allows counterterrorism objectives to insinuate into one of the most personal items of an individual's possessions. Users no longer need to consciously participate in modules on a computer but can be constantly notified about terrorism issues whenever they look at their phone. Thus, counterterrorism training can implant terrorism narratives into a variety of official and domestic urban locations.

However, it is the spatial content, not merely the location, of workshops that is the main focus of this research. Workshops reinforce the wider political narrative that terrorism is inevitable in a wide variety of urban spaces. Argus and Griffin training began with an overview of "the threat landscape" in which participants are given basic definitions and a history of national counterterrorism legislation. This was followed by multisensory simulations with photographs of recent terror attacks, video recordings, and accompanying sounds of explosions, screaming, and mimicked tinnitus to depict a mock terror attack. At the Argus workshop, participants were then required to respond as though they were employed as the Duty Manager at a hypothetical location. This requires participants to actively engage in security management, despite many of those that I spoke to not being employed in a specific security role, but more often associated positions such as event organizers, bank managers, or HR personnel.

Workshops present terrorism as not only an inevitable risk but also one directed at particular urban spaces. There is a consistent focus on “crowded places,” particularly shopping centers and transport hubs, as possible terrorism targets. An ACT video proposes that these spaces are “seen as locations with minimal security” for potential terrorists and informs participants about the new risks associated with “soft targets,” referring to spaces with minimal physical protection often used in everyday life such as schools, shops, and cafés. Though “soft targets” is a familiar term for security professionals and academics working on terrorism, several participants had not previously realized the extent of the apparent risk to these places and expressed shock with the workshop’s analysis of this technical language. This shock seemed to be amplified when another film showed everyday city spaces—including high streets, shopping centers, cafés—while a narrator states: “on any given day, people come to places like these . . . what if someone could take a crowded place and make it empty?” This encourages an imaginary of a city filled with potentially vulnerable spaces in which there is the possibility that an attack will cause irreparable damage if the participant does not act according to workshop training.

This points to the role of imaginations of urban spaces in how cities are understood and experienced. Kevin Lynch suggests that city inhabitants share “common mental pictures” or “public images” (1960: 7) which enable the city to be understood. While the content of the images will have “unique” features for different people, Lynch emphasizes that there are “areas of agreement” and a “common culture” (1960: 7) shared by all inhabitants. In this regard, counterterrorism workshops appear to depict “metal pictures” of city spaces vulnerable to terrorist attack. These mental images, Lynch argues, provide a means to orient oneself in urban spaces, thereby implying that imaginations of terrorism can become an approach through which one perceives the city. The term “geographic imaginaries” (Gregory 2004), similarly highlights the significant role of taken-for-granted spatial orderings of the world. Derek Gregory also emphasizes the performative implications of imaginations that not only are representations but “are vitally implicated in a material, sensuous process of ‘worlding’” (Gregory et al. 2009: 282). Imaginations of terrorism can therefore have tangible implications for urban life.

Through these narratives, the assumed safety of one’s everyday space is confronted, particularly as participants are told by session leaders that “it is not a matter of if, but when.” Despite the low risk of terrorism arising in urban spaces, counterterrorism training portrays it as an inevitable threat to cities. The workshops raised issues that some participants had not previously considered, with many indicating to me that they felt naïve for not being aware of potential problems earlier.

A rudimentary comparison with London’s knife crime suggests that this depiction of terrorism as an almost-certain threat is disproportionate. Between 2000 and 2017, 142 people were killed in terror attacks in the UK (START 2019), while 215 homicides using a “sharp instrument” were recorded in 2016–2017 alone (Office for National Statistics 2018). This rudimentary comparison does not acknowledge that terrorism causes physical and psychological wounds far beyond those who are killed. However, this figure highlights the disproportionate emphasis granted to concern about terrorism compared to other forms of violence. Through processes of “securitization” (Waever 1995), counterterrorism training depicts terrorism as a significant risk to life, which requires immense public and police response, including the use of pre-emptive counterterrorism training. Counterterrorism training is not merely an event at which participants are told of terrorism dangers, but a process that involves the selection and categorization of specific spaces as potential terror targets. By encouraging anticipatory imaginations of urban spaces, counterterrorism workshops appear to have a significant role in securitizing imaginations of urban space.

Preparing the City

An Argus workshop began with a multimedia terror attack simulation in which participants were required to identify and prepare measures to prevent and recover from terror attacks by hypothesizing how their workplaces may be vulnerable to terrorism. One workshop video claims "[terrorists] see the world differently to you and me. Where we see normality, they see a target" as a presenter walks around an abandoned high street, inviting the audience to consider which spaces are vulnerable. In another video, the audience is asked to identify examples of poor security as the camera follows a hypothetical "terrorist" around a hospital. The audience is prompted to look for spaces that may be vulnerable to misconduct. Thus, imaginations of urban terrorism are not abstract but demand active engagement from the audience, requiring the development of spatial mechanisms to prepare for a potential terror attack.

This expands beyond merely addressing the spatial layout, as participants are also informed of the need to modify specific aspects of building design. This includes the materiality of workplaces, with workshop leaders providing statistics of mortality rates from falling glass and suggesting that participants consult architectural liaison officers who could advise on laminated glass options. Participants were also advised to consult an engineer to locate structurally suitable "invacuation" locations—referring to spaces within a building deemed to be safe—and encouraged participants to consider the variegated security of their spaces, alongside suggestions that interior concrete stairwells may offer some protection. From installing protective window sheeting to being told to "plan possible hiding places or escape routes in advance" but to "avoid dead ends," the intricate features of one's workplace become infused with a narrative of a possible terror attack. Videos and narratives of both hypothetical and real terror attacks that have occurred in other urban spaces demand that participants identify similar spatial and architectural characteristics in their work environment.

The role of neurosis was implicitly acknowledged by workshop leaders who suggested to participants that advanced planning can reassure employees in their workplace. For example, when discussing the intricate components to be included in a "grab bag" of emergency supplies, and in which "secure" spaces to locate these, the workshop leader told participants that preparing such measures "makes them [the employees] feel in control, so they're are going to feel a bit safer about the [terrorism] situation." Isin's proposal that "the neurotic subject is one whose anxieties and insecurities are objects of government not in order to *cure* or *eliminate* such states but to *manage* them" (2004: 225, original emphasis) has clear parallels to the workshops. This recognition that governments are unable to eliminate anxieties informs how counterterrorism workshops actively acknowledge that preparation strategies are unable to completely alleviate fears of terrorism. Thus, the fear of terrorism seems to be recognized by workshop leaders as a tool to encourage compliance with preparedness recommendations.

Counterterrorism imaginaries become pervasive, in both being encouraged beyond one's immediate environment and as a constant recollection. This includes an expectation that vulnerability awareness should extend beyond one's immediate domain, to also include neighboring urban spaces. For example, participants are told to consider the security practices of their neighbors if they work in a multi-tenanted building. More importantly, counterterrorism workshops demand that participants must constantly engage with the counterterrorism process.

This again shares similarities with Isin's hypothesized "neurotic citizen." For Isin, "the neurotic citizen is not a passive, cynical subject but an active subject whose libidinal energies are channelled toward managing its anxieties and insecurities" (2004: 232). Counterterrorism training similarly cultivates an active citizen, as spatial imaginaries do not end when one leaves the

workshop or ends a training module; participants must constantly identify potential workplace insecurities. Workshop participants are encouraged to maintain counterterrorism training by regularly conducting exercise rehearsals to test hiding places and escape routes in their place of work. While the public has little or no responsibility for counterterrorism architectures, government-issued color-coded alerts and heightened military presence, counterterrorism workshops incorporate the public as active members of the counterterrorism process. Imagery and recollections must be actively introduced by workshop participants themselves. Malcolm describes this process as “embedding” through which “activities, roles and ideas in day-to-day life . . . become more like second nature” (2013: 312). With procedural acronyms and priority-making exercises, participants are told that they occupy a crucial role in managing their workspaces should terrorism arise. No longer is urban counterterrorism enacted at a distance by architects and security officials, it is now tangible and incorporated into everyday workplace routine. Imaginations of terrorism are repeatedly introduced into the workplace even without a terror attack occurring.

Existing research highlights the potential implications of constant reminders of the potential terrorism threat resulting from counterterrorism infrastructures. Although the fear-producing potential of counterterrorism infrastructures is disputed (Dalgard-Nielsen 2010), Cindi Katz highlights that cities have become littered with “everyday, routinized, barely noticed reminders of terror or the threat of an always ready presence of terrorism” (2006: 350) in what she terms “banal terrorism.” Counterterrorism training workshops challenge the “barely noticed” nature of security measures identified by Katz. By encouraging participants to continually reflect upon hypothetical danger and terror threat, workshops instead establish an extreme vigilance toward potential terrorism risks.

Evidence indicates that participants do enact the preparatory measures encouraged at the workshops. Follow-up research by Dylan Aplin and Marian Brooke Rogers (2019) found that 86 percent of participants who attended an Argus workshop identified spaces in their building that offered protection should they need to “invacuate” in the event of a terror attack, 68 percent had identified evacuation points, and 54 percent had installed “grab bags.” Counterterrorism workshops thus have a spatial legacy as participants make intricate adjustments to their working environments after attending training events.

Adjustments are encouraged without knowing how a terror attack will occur. Workshops reinforce the idea that terrorism is increasingly indeterminate with unpredictable manifestations. As Malcolm highlights, preparations for an attack are encouraged “without being fully able to determine what those scenarios specifically will look like” (2013: 312–313). This requires immense effort: participants must determine the multifarious ways an attack may manifest in their workplace, which could include bioterrorism, vehicular terrorism, and marauding firearms attacks among many other possible scenarios. Thus, spaces become imagined as though they could be targeted in numerous ways, reinforcing the alleged need for multilayered security against many possible threats.

Imagining potential terrorism entails imagining the danger that accompanies threat, which can, in turn, create feelings of fear. While fear is subjective, depending on individual factors including gender, social position, and immediate environment, research shows that preparedness relies upon generating fear. Massumi suggests that awareness of danger can create fear by creating a sense of anxiety about future danger (2010: 54). Yet fear is tied to the concept of terror, from which terrorism is derived. Terror is defined by the psychiatrist Frank Ochberg as “an extreme form of anxiety, often accompanied by aggression, denial, constricted affect, and followed by frightening imagery and intrusive repetitive recollection” (in Schmid and Jongman 2017: 19). Similarly, in *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle wrote that fear is “pain and agitation derived from

the imagination of a future destructive or painful evil" (2007: 128). Yet if, pre-emption relies on "the production of insecurity to which it itself contributes" (Massumi 2010: 58), in which a spatial imaginary "produces the effect it names" (Gregory 2004: 18), then counterterrorism imaginaries can have performative consequences.

This presents a paradox. The spatial imaginaries encouraged at counterterrorism training, in seeking to prepare for a future potential terror attack, can generate feelings of fear of the issue they seek to counter. While the fear-inducing potential of antiterrorism architectures is acknowledged (Sullivan and Elkus 2009), how urban imaginaries of terrorism can deploy anticipations of destructive harm has previously been overlooked. If counterterrorism training encourages participants to imagine their urban spaces as at risk of a potential threat, it is possible that feelings of fear, which are an integral aim of terrorism, are created by the possibility of an attack.

Counterterrorism Citizens

Workshop participants are advised about how to secure their workplaces and expand spatial imaginaries of terrorism to their conduct across the city. Primarily, counterterrorism training facilitates this expanded approach by depicting the workplace as one space within the wider city. A Project Griffin presentation slide stated, "protect yourself, your staff, your business and your community." This demand for participants to partake in protection resonates with Isin's discussion of neurosis surrounding computer networks. For Isin, "the network is the paradigmatic example of neuropolitics" (2004: 229) in that networks require "that each body on the network is also healthy." Similarly, in one workshop, after a video of a simulated explosives attack, participants were told: "you have a part to play to ensure that freedom (of public places) doesn't make you vulnerable." With this, workshop participants transition from being merely responsible for the counterterrorism security of their workplace, to acquiring responsibility for the security of the wider city.

Second, participants are told to transfer workplace training into their conduct around the city. For example, in discussing "potential attack target locations," participants were asked "who has been to one of these in the last few days?" with a screen listing transport hubs, hospitals, bars and clubs. Session leaders stated: "don't just think about work . . . what would happen when you're out and about?" and insisted that workshop training "is not just going to help you in your work life, but in your personal lives too." Although Project Argus and Griffin were primarily advertised to those who work in publicly accessible sites, statements such as these reveal that the workshop audience is also sought to assist with counterterrorism security in their capacity as members of the public in their daily conduct in cities. The workshop participant is not only responsible for ensuring the security of their workplace but to develop a persistent counterterrorism imaginary, to actively participate in counterterrorism objectives in a wide array of urban spaces.

The goal of incorporating the public into counterterrorism security has become increasingly explicit. In March 2018, the Metropolitan Police called for the public to become "counterterrorism citizens" (BBC News 2018) and encouraged members of the public to report any concerns about radicalization or terrorism to the police. The push for further public engagement in counterterrorism security increased in December 2019 as, following a terror attack at Fishmonger's Hall in London, ACT training was made available to the general public from their own home. ACT is purportedly targeted at those "working in or regularly visiting crowded places" (BBC News 2019). Yet crowded places are inevitable in contemporary European cities, as highlighted by the need for social distancing restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the

attempt to portray counterterrorism training as targeted to a specific section of society (those using crowded spaces) this is a large section of the public. Crowded spaces of contemporary European cities can include workplaces, one's daily commute, or the spaces visited for leisure. ACT training has thus expanded urban counterterrorism training beyond the initial remit of those working in public spaces to all those who use public spaces.

Encouragements to revise urban space management toward urban counterterrorism objectives also raises broader questions regarding the nature of public space. Though the workshops use the adjective "public" to describe urban spaces, the extent to which these spaces can be understood as "public" is unclear. Counterterrorism directives are known to infuse urban spaces with regulations that can override free expression and movement (Mitchell 2003). However, counterterrorism workshops not only impose these restrictions on the public but encourage them acquire responsibility to enforce such logics on space. Indeed, loitering in city spaces and photographing buildings were cited in counterterrorism workshops as suspicious behaviors to be aware of. Notwithstanding the risks that these activities could pose in some instances, these behaviors are also everyday urban practices, with loitering giving rise to the concept of the *flâneur* (Baudelaire 2010), and photography commonplace for both journalists and tourists. Amid wider forecasts about "the end of public space" (Mitchell 1995), further reflection is needed to explore whether counterterrorism workshops further these broader, underlying processes.

Conclusion: Creating a Neurotic City

Counterterrorism training and preparedness strategies are undoubtedly beneficial should a terror attack arise. However, the potential psychological, social, economic, and political consequences of embedding imaginaries of terrorism in a wide range of urban spaces through counterterrorism training must be recognized. In particular, preparation for terrorism can evoke urban neurosis about terrorism, irrespective of a terror attack occurring by encouraging constant spatial awareness of terrorism in the urban landscape as a means to counter possible attacks.

While members of the public rarely have responsibility for conventional counterterrorism measures, such as physical security measures in public spaces, government-issued warnings, or military presence, counterterrorism workshops incorporate the public as key actors in urban counterterrorism. Moreover, though counterterrorism training was initially portrayed as a tool for employees to apply in workspaces, it has become deliberately broader. It now extends beyond modifying workplace practices to also provide some preparedness capacity in the everyday experience of the city. Counterterrorism training is portrayed as a supportive activity, as an opportunity to design one's workplace in a way that can save lives, as well as livelihoods by reducing the possibility of structural damage to businesses. The potential of counterterrorism workshops to assist in this regard should not be discredited, but consideration of their other potential implications is needed. Just as Isin warns of the "neurotic citizen," counterterrorism training requires the participant to actively calibrate their spatial perceptions to be constantly aware of possible harms. Contemporary terrorism is deliberately elusive and cannot be specified. Yet the spatial regulation encouraged in workshops demands the city, not just the citizen, becomes managed through neurosis. Just as the citizen must manage anxieties through neurosis, public spaces become imbued with a neurosis, creating a "neurotic city," as a means to address anxieties surrounding increasingly elusive terrorism in Europe.

The possible implications of spatialized counterterrorism imaginaries for urban life are concerning. Although counterterrorism imaginaries are not homogeneously experienced and workshop participants expressed differing levels of engagement with workshop material, Lynch's concept of urban imaginaries persuasively argues that "common mental pictures" (1960: 6) are carried by a large number of urban inhabitants. Isin's (2004) discussion of neurosis indicates that one outcome of constant awareness of danger is a spiral of security enhancements, as being alert to threats through neurosis results in a perpetual search for security. The neurotic citizen demands that "the need to eliminate . . . anxiety from its existence turns its wants into claims" of rights to protection. The potential for counterterrorism training to facilitate this security spiral is evident in how workshop participants were encouraged to browse a hypothetical "grab bag" of emergency necessities that could be purchased from an associated supplier.

Counterterrorism training presents a narrow understanding of urban space that cannot capture the complexities of cities. Cities are not only composed of buildings, sites, and locations at risk of terrorism and must necessarily be secured. Yet half-day training workshops and online modules, understandably, cannot address the multilayered spatial, political, historical, and human complexities of urban life. Participants are instead presented with an exclusively future-oriented narrative of urban space inevitably threatened by the risk of attack. Twenty-first-century cities encounter numerous other problems, particularly issues of sustainability and environmental change as well as human issues of inequalities, homelessness, and violence. Although terrorism is a significant concern for contemporary European cities, this over-emphasis risks portraying space as merely an abstract category to be secured, rather than a lived space of bodies, relations, felt qualities, and everyday practices.

The implications of the terror threat for everyday landscapes thus go far beyond the architectural security measures in public spaces. The pervasiveness of contemporary fortification and surveillance is, undoubtedly, of great significance for urban policing and democracy. However, sustained recognition is needed of the role of taken-for-granted spatial imaginaries that, though deployed in distant workshop boardrooms and in online spaces, can have practical, long-term implications for urban life.

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NOTES

1. The number of fatalities is of victims, not perpetrators.

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