Vigilant citizenship

Legal imaginaries and political subjectivity in Miami

Jeursen, T.J.

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Figure 1.1. Miami Police Department, Downtown Miami, October 2016.

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CITIZENSHIP AND LEGAL IMAGINARIES

A LEGAL SHOT?

As I accompanied Rico, an officer with the Miami Police Department (MPD), on a ride along during his patrol, he received a request from the police dispatcher. A 911 call had come in from a security guard who felt unable to deal with an intoxicated man harassing visitors in a park in Downtown Miami. Security guards often prefer to call police officers rather than act on their own accord, as legally speaking the police have additional rights when it comes to the use of physical force. Rico, another MPD officer, and I found the drunken man stumbling around a bench by a footpath overlooking the ocean, sipping from a bottle. He was White, wearing jeans and a grey t-shirt, and some of his belongings were scattered in the grass around him. Rico greeted him and asked him politely to collect his things and leave the park. The man appeared unresponsive to Rico's requests, but grabbed a rubber hammer from his backpack and began to twirl around with it, in a slow and uncontrolled manner. The three of us stood still as Rico repeated his request a few more times. I did not feel threatened by the man's behavior, and neither of the police officers seemed very impressed. Still, the man was carrying a rubber hammer, an object that could be classified as a weapon. He was also trespassing on private property, publicly intoxicated, and ignoring direct instructions issued by two police officers. Rico wondered out loud: "Can I shoot him?"

It was clear to me that Rico was not actually considering taking out his handgun and firing it, potentially injuring or killing the drunken man. Rather, and in light of recent debates surrounding police violence, Rico was trying to figure out what was still legal in the given context. His question, and his interpretation of the scene, were motivated by a desire to understand the physical and emotional conditions that constituted a legitimate reason to shoot, a reason that could hold up in court. Carefully observing the man, who had begun to pack up his belongings, the two police officers concluded that, yes, Rico could have shot the man without being found guilty in a court of law. Eventually, the man left the park and the officers' presence was required elsewhere: three skateboarding teenagers were flouting the park rules and ignoring the security guard's requests to leave.

The encounter in the park speaks directly to the focus of this dissertation, on the workings of citizenship and legal imaginaries in the context of everyday security provision. Rico sought to read the threat of violence not only in terms of the actual risk of physical harm, but in relation to broader and shared understandings of the law, working out what constituted a weapon, legally speaking, and what rules and laws the intoxicated man was breaking. He drew on this legal imaginary to understand the parameters of his own agency, his room to maneuver, which in this case included exploring the possibility of shooting a man without being prosecuted or found guilty in a court of law. While we might of course expect a law enforcement professional to have an above-average awareness of what constitutes the legal use of force, Rico's immediate, explicit framing of the encounter in legal terms was striking. More broadly, it resonated strongly with how many other Miamians tend to draw on legal imaginaries as a main framework for interpreting and evaluating security practices.

As many observers have noted, in the US and beyond, legality and justice do not necessarily coincide (e.g., Jackson, 2015). Americans who are formally entitled to certain rights – including rights related to protection – might not necessarily be able to exercise them. Many people experience violent actions, which the state's legislative and judiciary branches have labeled "legal", as forms of structural inequality and injustice. This disjuncture between legality and legitimacy instills feelings of powerlessness in victims, relatives, and affected communities. There have been many recent exemplary cases in the US in which perpetrators of lethal violence, in particular police officers, have been found not guilty. Examples include the police killings of Eric Garner in New York, Michael Brown Jr. in Ferguson, Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Korryn Gaines in Randallstown, Walter Scott in Charleston, and Freddie Gray in Baltimore.

In Florida, the most infamous example in recent years was the case of George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch captain who shot and killed Trayvon Martin, an unarmed Black teenager, in 2013. Zimmerman was eventually acquitted of all charges, on the basis that his actions constituted a form of self-defense that was justified under Florida's Stand Your Ground legislation. Such cases illustrate that while the individuals who caused these deaths were not found guilty in the eyes of the law, the legal judgments nevertheless left many citizens with a sense of injustice and insecurity (Jackson, 2015; Taylor, 2013; Martin, 2018; Brucato, 2015). They emphasize that in practice, security providers – not only the police but also neighborhood watch members such as Zimmerman – often fail to protect vulnerable citizens, and can even be considered a source of danger and insecurity themselves.

Such security encounters, like Rico's encounter with the man in the park, also highlight two other dimensions of everyday security provision in US cities and beyond: the pluralization of policing and the extent to which security providers themselves also experience insecurity and precariousness. While the state's monopoly on the provision of security has always been more imagined than real, in the context of neoliberal policies, state agencies

have increasingly shifted the responsibility for safeguarding physical integrity and material belongings onto citizens. In the case of Miami, security provision involves an increasingly diverse range of actors, from the police to neighborhood watch groups to private security companies. Miamians not only look to multiple types of security professionals, they also organize their own security measures, often more informally, mobilizing various weapons, technologies, and information to keep themselves safe. In the context of the ubiquity of firearms and the heated public debate surrounding the legality of violent security encounters, police officers and security guards often feel trapped between their duty to protect, the danger they face themselves, and the risk of prosecution and public condemnation.

The changing governance of security – these diverse and dynamic relationships and interactions – influences how Miamians experience rights, responsibilities, and political belonging. Because of its political significance and widespread everyday impact, and its changing nature in terms of pluralization and privatization, I focus in this dissertation on everyday security provision as site from which to analyze transformations in citizenship, defined here as membership in a political community which involves specific rights, responsibilities and duties (Leydet, 2017). Shifts in security provision affect political subjectivity more broadly, understood as the thoughts, feelings, and motivations regarding the sociopolitical system and distribution of power in general (e.g., Strauss and Friedman, 2018). This dissertation seeks to contribute to theoretical discussions on citizenship, and more specifically political subject formation, by addressing the following research question: How do Miamians enact and experience citizenship in the context of everyday security provision?

The main argument developed in this dissertation as an answer to this question is that legal imaginaries shape the transformation of citizenship in the context of reconfigured security provision. Based on the concept of social imaginaries and work on the imagination of social practice (e.g., Taylor, 2004; Appadurai, 1996), I use the concept of legal imaginaries to refer to broadly shared understandings of the law, including its significance and applicability in comparison to other normative frameworks. Miamians experience and enact their citizenship through these understandings, which shape how they perceive their agency, their room to maneuver in the urban security environment. Throughout this dissertation, I explore how Miamians develop, interpret and justify security practices on the basis of these legal imaginaries, based on what they believe to be legal and pertaining to their (constitutional) rights. I show that legality is the dominant normative framework in shaping security practices, prevailing those based on other

ethical and moral values than the law alone. Ideas of legality and legitimacy become increasingly entangled, almost synonymous, and form the basis for acts and experiences of citizenship in Miami. I suggest that the concept of legal imaginaries is not only useful for understanding how citizenship is enacted and experienced in the empirical domain of security provision and privatization, and in the cultural and political context of Miami and the US. More broadly, this approach can help us understand how citizenship is reconfigured in, and contributes to, global processes of neoliberalization in the 21st century.

In this dissertation, I draw on and combine two existing approaches to citizenship: approaches that focus on the state's formal incorporation of members into a political community, and those that emphasize the substantive distribution of actual political, cultural, and social rights and responsibilities amongst the members of a body politic (e.g., Holston, 2008). Because the formal status of citizenship does not guarantee actual possession of and access to rights, scholars have increasingly focused on the substantive distribution of citizenship rights and examined how and when citizenship is enacted and experienced in practice (Holston, 2008; Isin, 2008; Lazar, 2008). Isin and Nielsen (2008) propose that we "shift focus from the institution of citizenship and the citizen as individual agent to acts of citizenship" (2008: 2), and define these acts as everyday political deeds. In this dissertation, I combine elements from these "formal-legal" and "substantive" approaches. I analyze, first, how interpretations of laws and legal rights, often associated with the formal status of citizenship, constitute broadly shared understandings of the law. Second, I examine how these legal imaginaries translate to substantive experiences and acts of citizenship in daily life. This approach enables an understanding of how legal imaginaries affect the provision of security and the experience of citizenship in Miami's urban environment by police officers, private security guards and local residents.

The title of this dissertation, "Vigilant Citizenship", refers to the idealized process of political subject formation in Miami. A vigilant citizen is a citizen who is aware of her rights. Someone who has developed a heightened alertness of when and how these rights are violated, together with an understanding of how to navigate legal accountability and the responsibilities bestowed upon her by state and civic agencies. Vigilant citizenship is a distinct elaboration of a citizenship agenda, "a normative framing[s] of citizenship that prescribe[s] what norms, values, and behavior are appropriate for those claiming membership of a political community" (de Koning et al., 2015: 121). In other words, it involves defining what "good citizenship" means. In this case, this normativity is informed by neoliberal ideologies and policies,

in which citizens are imagined as rational subjects capable of navigating assets and liabilities of their own accord, and therefore also individually culpable for insecurity, misconduct, and illegal violence.

This dissertation is based on long-term ethnographic research in Miami, a city where police officers, citizens, companies, and state agencies rely on available legal services on a daily basis. Although certain elements discussed in this dissertation are clearly context-specific, such as private gun ownership, the overarching contribution of my dissertation has analytical implications that go beyond the US. We can learn from Miami how legal imaginaries shape everyday security provision in a way that primarily benefits individuals rather than communities, emphasizes individual liability, and renders structural inequalities and wrongdoings less visible to public scrutiny. Focusing on the interplay between citizenship, security provision, and legal imaginaries can help us understand and address violent security practices and increasing forms of urban inequality, both in Miami and elsewhere. My analysis of Miami also draws on urban studies literature that challenges the core assumptions upon which urban theory is formulated (e.g., Robinson, 2013; McFarlane, 2010). By using the work of scholars who base their arguments on contexts generally considered to be "non-Western", this dissertation generates a more critical understanding of processes of individualization and alienation typically associated with the US context in which my research has been situated.

In this introductory chapter, I further elaborate my main theoretical contributions, drawing on insights and approaches from political and legal anthropology to intervene in the interdisciplinary fields of citizenship studies and security studies. In the next section, I discuss my understanding of citizenship as a process of political subject formation and explain how legal imaginaries shape this process in the context of everyday security provision. Next, I discuss the three main "elements" through which I analyze the particular ways that legal imaginaries mediate the relationship between citizenship and security: guns, cameras, and secrets. I go on to discuss my methodological approach and conclude with a brief overview of the dissertation structure.

TOWARDS A LEGAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF CITIZENSHIP

The main aim of this dissertation is to expand existing approaches to citizenship studies by engaging with anthropological approaches to politics and the law. Political scientists in particular have framed citizenship as the formal membership of a nation-state and the ownership of rights. In this perspective, the state is the main actor capable of providing public services, such as security, to citizens who are incorporated as formal members. Research drawing on this approach has therefore been primarily concerned with how state agencies govern the inclusion and exclusion of citizens as formal members, and how the latter claim their rights in return (Migdal, 2001; Milliken and Krause, 2002).

James Holston and Arjun Appadurai (1999) suggest supplementing this "formal-legal" approach by studying the substantive rights that citizens can actually claim and receive in everyday life: "although in theory full access to rights depends on membership, in practice that which constitutes citizenship substantively is often independent of its formal status" (1999: 4). Many persons who have the formal, legal status of a citizen within a given nation-state are excluded from enjoying the rights of citizenship and participating meaningfully in the body politic. Such forms of substantive exclusion apply to those citizens who experience that their preferences are "not adequately embodied in the national-public sphere of rights even through the communities in which they live may overwhelmingly approve them" (ibid.). On the other hand, persons without a formal, legal citizenship status may in practice actually receive public services officially reserved for members only.

Both the formal-legal and substantive approach to citizenship focus mainly on the distribution of rights in the form of public services. Various scholars following a more everyday understanding of citizenship question this emphasis on governance and governmentality. They suggest that it is more meaningful to study citizenship not only through the eyes of governance actors, focusing on how citizens claim and contest public services, but also as a lived reality that takes shape in everyday life. Working from ethnographic and practice-based approaches, scholars such as Engin Isin (2008) and Sian Lazar (2008) conceptualize citizenship as a process that consists of everyday "acts" and "experiences".

This means that citizenship is not a static fact, but a process of political subject formation and transformation, in which concrete, embodied acts and experiences can be identified and studied; acts that shape and reflect rights, responsibilities, and moments of collectivity (see also de Koning et al., 2015). A shift towards acts and experiences, looking beyond the governance of public services, and including both legal citizens and non-citizens, allows for a more thorough understanding of how and why citizenship becomes meaningful. In this dissertation I use the term "local residents" instead of "citizen" to emphasize that citizenship concerns a lived reality that extends beyond formal-legal citizens and the status of membership within a nation-state.

The processual, active approach to citizenship adopted in this dissertation is especially relevant in light of the increasing involvement and responsibilization of local residents in violent and extralegal acts. Police shootings, riots, civil disobedience, lynching, and other forms of vigilantism can all be understood as ways in which ordinary people define and express different sorts of belonging and rights (see Goldstein, 2010; Risør, 2010). As I explain in Chapter Three, many Miami residents consider owning, carrying, and using a weapon to be a fundamental aspect of what citizenship means in practice. In Chapter Five, I discuss how carrying a gun at a time and in a place where this is not legal could still be considered an act and experience of citizenship. A private security guard who keeps the gun on his ankle a secret at work believes that the circumstances in which he would use the gun would also legitimize his decision to carry a concealed weapon in the first place.

While some anthropologists have shifted away from a state-centric approach to citizenship, focusing on how political belonging is experienced and formed in everyday life outside the rubric of the state (see e.g. Ong, 2006; Jaffe, 2012a; Diphoorn, 2015), the importance of the formal-legal dimension of citizenship may be too easily overlooked. While the (state) laws and rights associated with a formal-legal citizen status do not necessarily define the substantive outcomes in terms of everyday security provision, I argue that we should attend to them seriously nonetheless. The shift in focus within (anthropological) citizenship studies from law to everyday practice has sometimes tended to obscure the strong significance of the law in everyday life. As Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2013: 35) notes, in everyday life, "even the simplest acts are controlled to a greater or lesser extent by some legal agreement, limitation or prescribed direction, whether this is in the public or private space." I seek to reinsert a consideration of the legal dimension of everyday citizenship practices by focusing on what I call legal imaginaries. Legal imaginaries inform these practices, shaping what people believe to be legal and what they understand as justice, regardless of whether this is actually supported by the judiciary system. Through legal imaginaries, people define what justice means in practice, how they understand their legal rights, responsibilities and duties in a given situation. This dissertation aims to bridge the divide between "law" and "everyday practice" in contemporary citizenship studies by demonstrating how understandings of the law shape the everyday and substantive dimensions of citizenship.

LEGAL IMAGINARIES

I define legal imaginaries as broadly shared understandings of the law that

inform how people understand the world around them. The concept of legal imaginaries captures the interpretation of legality, what is in accordance with the law, and its relation to legitimacy, broader social norms of what is seen as lawful and just in a given context. What is legal does not necessarily have to be legitimate and vice versa. Ideally, legality flows from legitimacy, making the former an outcome and institutionalization of widely accepted social and ethical norms that identify and differentiate between desired and undesired behavior and experiences in society. In such an ideal situation, widespread norms and values inform what is eventually considered legal in a court of law, promoting a widely supported, democratic interpretation of justice.

I argue that both legality and legitimacy shape acts and experiences of citizenship, as they inform understanding of laws and rights that make certain actions and relationships possible and constrain others. Because of its enshrinement in the US Constitution, the right to bear arms can make private gun ownership an act of citizenship. At the same time, citizenship acts and experiences also become meaningful because they speak to interpretations of legitimacy: Miamians feel that owning a gun is often the "right thing to do" and part of their responsibility as a "citizen". In other words, what persons see as "good" and "bad" in everyday life is not only shaped by the law, but is also informed by their more-than-legal moral compass. While legitimacy and legality overlap at times, they frequently do not, resulting in experiences of injustice for many persons. It is important to account for both in order to fully understand how citizenship is transformed in light of shifts in governance, an analysis facilitated by the concept of legal imaginaries.

Akin to Charles Taylor's (2002: 106) concept of social imaginaries, legal imaginaries concern the expectations that people have of one another, "the kind of common understanding which enables us to carry out the collective practices that make up our social life" that are "carried in stories, images, stories, and legends". People assess and justify socio-political relationships and daily interactions through legal imaginaries, as an important system of meaning. Legal imaginaries can be understood as a "background" (e.g., Goffman, 1959), which reconfigures everyday acts and experiences of citizenship, both in public and private life. More specifically, the concept of legal imaginaries draws from socio-legal studies that examine the law, on the one hand, as an object, as something that ordinary people employ and look from a distance; and, on the other hand, as a frame, something that configures how legal professionals and others interpret situations (Geertz, 1983; Merry, 1990; Pirie, 2013; Sarat, 1990). In *The Legal Imagina-*

tion, his critique of the law as a positivist entity, James Boyd White (1973) specifically addresses law students and legal professionals. White (1973: xiii) describes the law as "a language, by which I do not mean just a set of terms and locutions, but habits of mind and expectations – what might also be called a culture". Although his work specifically targeted those who work directly with the law, it was one of the first attempts to conceptualize law as a rhetoric through which people express meaning and structure sensibility.

Focusing specifically on the law as a frame, legal anthropologists have examined how and when the law "provides a set of categories and framework through which the world is interpreted" (Merry, 1990: 9), as a main lens through which we are "imagining the real" (Geertz, 1983: 183). Legal anthropologists tend to interpret the law as a system of meaning, like religion, art, and ideology, which goes beyond the codification of social norms and a mechanism for control (e.g., Fuller, 1994). In light of this, legal anthropologists have studied how people with different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds experience laws, judiciary agencies, relationships, and disputes as part of the litigation process, and how they use legal ideas to meet their needs. Austin Sarat (1990: 344), for example, states that "the legal consciousness of the welfare poor is […] substantially different from other groups in society for whom law is a less immediate and visible presence".

The concept of legal imaginaries expands aforementioned understandings of the law and connects to the broader notion of "legal culture". Similar to the work of Sally Engle Merry's work on this concept, this dissertation deals with questions of "how readily people define their problems in legal terms, when they turn to the law for help" (2012: 56). More specific than legal culture, however, legal imaginaries concern the lenses through which understandings of both legality and legitimacy manifest in everyday life. Throughout this thesis, I identify different specific legal imaginaries, related for instance, to ideas of individual responsibility, to the prioritization of judicial over other normative frameworks, and to the probability of litigation. In addition, I seek to explain how such legal imaginaries are emplaced, embodied, and materialized, building on an emergent body of literature that examines how people sense of, employ and reflect upon the law through the imagination (Fuller, 1994; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2013).

Drawing on gender studies and its attentiveness to the domestic and intimate dimensions of political life, the concept of legal imaginaries also opens up the possibility to discuss the entanglements between the public and private spheres. As legal imaginaries are emplaced, embodied and materialized, they take on an intimacy, compelling us to recognize how

citizenship acts and experiences not only take within the public, formal political sphere, but increasingly affect domestic, personal lives. Understanding the law in concrete terms and actions, such a recognition of legal intimacies emphasizes that the public world of law shapes and is reshaped in an intimate sphere. Miamians experience legality and legitimacy on an intimate level, and my empirical findings illustrate how personal experiences and relationships are increasingly read in terms of legality, as, for example, security-related personal secrets become a legal concern. Such an approach also echoes scholarly work that focuses on the sensorial aspects of citizenship, and how senses constitute the political (e.g., Trnka et al., 2013). This dissertation is particularly concerned with how social and urban life has become interlaced with the law, and what kind of affective experiences this produces and reflects.

The analytical application of legal imaginaries seems particularly useful in a world where residents, state agencies, and private companies increasingly litigate against one another at the intersections of human rights, constitutional, and criminal law (von Benda-Beckmann et al., 2009; Donovan, 2008). As John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff (2009) note, politicians and civil society organizations increasingly imagine the law as a magical solution to social, political, and individual problems, reflecting a more broader belief in the capacity of the law to establish and restore order. This tendency is evident in US politics, where politicians rely on litigation in order to have their claims supported, policies accepted, or accusations refuted. Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Keebet von Benda-Beckmann and Julia Eckert (2009) use the term "lawfare" to capture the shift of politics towards the legal courts, of democracy to law, and the transformation of political issues into technical-legal problems.

In answering how legal imaginaries shape acts and experiences of citizenship, I examine specific legal imaginaries that are at work locally in Miami. In doing so, I take into account the cultural and political context and global processes such as neoliberalism that produce specific legal imaginaries. In my case, the specific legal imaginaries that shape the acts and experiences of citizenship in Miami result from its broader political and geographical context, including processes such as individualization. But it is also formed by the common law tradition in the US. Characteristic of former British colonies, there is no comprehensive compilation of legal rules and status in common law. Rather, legislative decisions are largely based on judicial decisions that have already been made in similar cases, called the precedent. A jury of ordinary people without legal training eventually decides on the facts of a case. In comparison, in the civil law tradition common in other

parts of the world, the judge is much more similar to an investigator, who is informed by legal scholars and professionals (The Robbins Collection, 2010). This approach to legislation suggests that legality is much more dependent on a specific juridical procedure (such as precedent and due process), rather than the result of a political or societal discussion surrounding notions of legitimacy.

This dissertation shows that Miami's legal imaginaries involve a relationship between legality and legitimacy in which Miamians' moral epistemology has become increasingly based on legality instead of legitimacy. Although many Miamians have been exposed to various forms of injustice, and might even have first-hand experience with the ambiguous workings of the law, they still consider legislation to be the essential basis for achieving a more just world. This entrenched belief in the law underlies a legalistic and individualistic approach to justice in Miami and the US. Such a legal imaginary makes it difficult and to deal with issues such as police violence in ways that go beyond litigation. Indeed, this specific legal imaginary relates to the more broader phenomenon of "litigiousness", the inclination to litigate.

Miamians perceive and rely on state laws as their go-to instrument to address many individual experiences of wrongdoing or feelings of inequality, a perception and practice strengthened by the presence and involvement of legal professionals *(abogados)* in daily life throughout the city. Drawing on legal imaginaries, Miamians claim rights and enact political agency, establishing a kind of (imagined) freedom from state interference and other government actors in their personal lives. Many citizens consider the law to be their best option in pursuing financial gains, socio-political influence, or a sense of justice after their citizenship rights have been violated. In Overtown, Miami, residents have developed the concept of "winning the ghetto lottery" to ironically refer to the amount of money people can receive by prosecuting city officials and private companies who have violated their rights in one way or another. As this example suggests, a legal imaginary that emphasizes litigiousness can have an important influence in shaping interpersonal interactions and state-citizen relationships.

The workings of such legal imaginaries are particularly visible in the empirical context of security provision: people legitimize their (sometimes violent) practices and those of others based on what they imagine to be legal. How they imagine legality, however, does not necessarily correspond with what the state's judicial apparatus defines as legal. Indeed, as I show in this dissertation, legal imaginaries shape acts and experiences of citizenship

in ways that can also contest and subvert state laws and agencies (Goldstein, 2010; Risør, 2010). However, such act and experiences still speak to the importance of legality – and not legitimacy – in terms of citizenship. In my ethnographic exploration of how Miamians articulate and enact specific legal imaginaries in terms of legality and legitimacy, I discuss how they negotiate an individualized legal liability, how what I call "the legal gaze" structures security encounters, and how the legal implications of objects, technologies, and forms of knowledge shape their room to maneuver within everyday security provision.

VIGILANT CITIZENSHIP

A focus on legal imaginaries can enable a better understanding of how an ideal type of citizenship is configured within and across different contexts. In the case of Miami and the US in general, I refer to this process as "vigilant citizenship". Vigilant citizenship is what Anouk de Koning et al. (2015) refer to as a citizenship agenda, a normative framework that "prescribe[s] relations between people and larger structures of rule and belonging" (2015: 1). As an ideal type of citizenship, vigilant citizenship entails the formation of a political subject who is imagined and expected to be a rational calculating subject, who is capable of making use of certain assets and dealing with liabilities in a highly individualized manner. Vigilant citizens are citizens who have a heightened sense of alertness regarding when and how their rights have been violated, and who take on the necessary duties in response.

This normative framing of citizenship is particularly noticeable in the context of security, a domain characterized by "precarity": a fleetingness of present conditions, a vulnerability, and the inability to predict the circumstances in the future (Simone, 2018; Simone and Rao, 2012; Vigh, 2009). While such a condition is perhaps all too easily applied to nation-states characterized by an overall politically volatile situation, it is important to refrain from reproducing geographical hierarchies of development (Han, 2018), in which "developed countries" are less precarious than "developing countries". Indeed, security provision in the US is also directly affected by larger developments conceptualized under precarity, which "has come to signal the ways in which life and labor have transformed in an age of globalization" (Han, 2018: 332). I use precarity to capture the conditions in which everyday security provision takes shape in Miami, taking into account the perspectives of the multiple actors involved. Police officers, local residents, and private security guards were subject to processes and conditions of individualization, informality, and vulnerability (both legal-

ly and physically). Precarity reflects the sense that what these people were aiming for – in my case, security – was close and achievable, "and if they are willing to try anything, take on any kind of debt or game, that they will be able to get what they want" (Schiller and Simone, 2015: 2). More broadly speaking, the concept shifts my empirical lens towards how Miamians dealt with the push and pull of social forces and undertook security measures and arrangements in light of local, national, and global developments.

In such negotiations of precarity, my research found that Miamians seemed particularly concerned with working out what is legal in a given context, and how they can justify certain acts in legal terms. The normative framework of vigilant citizenship also emphasizes that, as citizens, they themselves can and should answer these questions. In other words, it presents individualized responsibility as the main frame through which to navigate legal accountability. I draw here on Henrik Vigh's (2009) concept of social navigation, which he uses to analyze how people respond to precarity by making sense of and predicting the movement of their environment. "We act," Vigh (2009: 420) explains, "adjust and attune our strategies and tactics in relation to the way we experience and imagine and anticipate the movement and influence of social forces". Similarly, Miamians navigate the legally relevant assets and liabilities they can identify in their surroundings, in order to protect themselves from, for instance, legal prosecution, or to explore their options to sue others.

In connecting security provision to larger debates on precarity and social navigation, this dissertation also seeks to move beyond traditional actor-based approaches within security studies (e.g., Loader, 2000; Jones and Newburn, 2006). In analyzing how Miamians experience everyday security provision, I focus particularly on different forms of materiality and technology, expanding our focus to non-human elements. In addition, I emphasize that feelings of precarity are shared and widespread, and extend beyond security "clients" to security "providers" and "threats". Indeed, these roles are blurred and such feelings are not exclusive to a specific experience or professional status, but are part of larger societal developments.

This emphasis on precarity also entails an expansion of certain conceptualizations of the term "vigilant", which refer to those who enforce the law without the consent of the legal authorities (vigilantes), or the heightened level of awareness of possible dangers (vigilance). Andrew Newman (2012), for example, uses vigilant citizenship to conceptualize how state agencies mobilize residents of lower-income neighborhoods in Paris for the purpose of monitoring and controlling each other, framed as a form of civic engagement. Sean P. Hier and Josh Greenberg (2012) refer to

several government policies that promote the responsibility of citizens to arrange for their own security. While my use of vigilant citizenship includes such aspects, I mobilize this concept to refer to the institutionalization and normalization of practices of watchful self-protection that extend beyond security provision: it is also a broader normativity that shapes citizenship formation more generally.

In order to explain how legal imaginaries and vigilant citizenship shape everyday security practices in Miami, this dissertation focuses on three distinct elements: guns, cameras, and secrets. As suggested in the previous section, everyday security provision often blurs the lines of public and private, and guns, cameras, and secrets can fruitfully be thought together in the terms of legal intimacies. Guns are a core element in security provision in Miami. Designed in a way that suggests one particular way of use, guns are ingrained in a material culture, but are also embedded in the legal framework of private gun ownership. Although cameras have an important material dimension, it is as a technology to "make visible" that they are particularly relevant, and it is the legal possibilities of this capacity that I discuss within this research project. Like guns and cameras, secrets can also be owned, but they are more abstract. I refer here to the socio-political knowledge that can become relevant for security provision, especially as it shapes intimate relationships and interactions. While distinct, these three elements are often related. For example, cameras are often used to record gun violence and people keep their illegal or concealed gun a secret from others.

A STORY OF PROTAGONISTS, NEIGHBOR-HOODS AND ORGANIZATIONS

This dissertation is based on eleven months of fieldwork in Miami. In answering my research question, I draw on the stories and experiences of six individual Miamians: Lux, Darius, Sarah, Olaf, Marcus, and Fenix. Centering on these six protagonists, I analyze how they enact and experience citizenship in the context of larger sociopolitical developments and security concerns, such as debates around private gun ownership, the pluralization and privatization of security, and the use of mobile cameras. While my fieldwork involved participant observation across a range of urban sites and with different security-related organizations, this focus on key interlocutors allowed me to understand how individuals experience and shape their room to maneuver: how they navigate laws, state agencies, neighbors, materiality, technology, and knowledge in Miami's urban environment.

By working most intensively with these six particular individuals, I was able to acquire an in-depth understanding of how different professional and private lives are embedded in larger urban developments. All born and raised in Miami, the protagonists of this dissertation worked, lived, and spent most of their free time in the city, sometimes in close proximity to each other. I discuss how these protagonists experienced and provided security for others and for themselves, and how they navigated their rights and responsibilities in doing so. Although they had their own ways of dealing with insecurity and feelings of unsafety, they held shared interpretations of the law that helped me understand how and why Miamians – and perhaps more broadly Americans – own guns, use cameras, and navigate secrecy. By combining the perspectives of "regular" residents, private security guards, and police officers, this dissertation moves beyond traditional categorizations of security provision.

Lux was an African-American police officer with the MPD, working four days a week in Overtown and one day a week in Wynwood. I met her early on in my fieldwork, as the executive director of the local Business Improvement District (BID) gave me a tour of the upcoming neighborhood. Unlike other police officers, Lux seemed receptive to the idea of having me around during her work in Wynwood. I quickly developed a friendly relationship with her, and I was able to discuss a diversity of relevant subjects with her, including sensitive topics such as police violence and racial profiling. I met Lux on a regular basis during my fieldwork. Together, we walked through Wynwood, enjoyed the air-conditioning in her car during hot afternoons, and spent time together at lunch cafes and bars outside of her work hours. Her experiences and insights were central to my understanding of the experiences and actions of police officers in Miami.

Olaf, a White American man in his late twenties, was a musician, and my roommate during my fieldwork in Miami. Together with his girlfriend, he lived just north of Wynwood and had been looking for a roommate online. Olaf was happy with my reply, as he had been receiving "a lot of crazy and weird emails." Once I moved in, Olaf and I quickly became friends and I joined him on several occasions out in Miami. Olaf considered himself to be part of Miami's Jewish community, like his mother and other relatives, and eventually moved to an area in Miami Beach known for its relatively large Jewish population. Living and going out with Olaf and his friends provided me with an understanding of how they dealt with security, rights, and responsibilities, and allowed me to discuss and reflect on our differences regarding these issues.

Darius, a Cuban-American security guard, worked at Happy Hour

(a pseudonym), which was one of the bars on Ocean Drive, the main boulevard of Miami Beach. Darius was working for Xecurity, a private security company with clients all over South Beach and parts of Wynwood. I got to know Darius through a police officer with the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) who was an acquaintance of one of my academic supervisors and who used to work at Happy Hour. After talking with the Happy Hour's security manager, I was allowed to hang out with the security guards on my own terms. Darius worked long hours, often until three or four in the morning. There was not much for him to do, and together with other security guards at Happy Hour, we discussed our professional and personal lives, body building, ate fried crickets (cheap and full of protein: the ideal body builder snack), and marveled at Darius' customized motorbike with mini batwings on the side mirrors. Most of the security guards were concerned with their physique, making sure they obtained an idealized look of someone who could physically provide security. I would meet Darius every one or two weeks. During these times, I would sit with him at the entrance to the bar, or follow him as we walked through or around Happy Hour. Through his experiences as a low-paid, overworked, and at times anxious security guard, Darius played a key role in my understanding of vigilant citizenship. His stories and behavior showed me how individuals in these precarious situations imagine their rights and responsibilities, how they relate to other security actors and citizens, and how they understand race, laws, and broader surveillance policies.

Sarah, an African-American woman in her mid-forties, lived in Overtown together with her dog. She used to be a nurse, but at the time we met she was unemployed and receiving disability benefits because of leg and spine injuries . Sarah lived on the ground floor of a two-story apartment complex, close to the iron gate where you entered the property. I met her during a Crime Watch meeting in Overtown, where police officers and residents discussed crime and security arrangements in the neighborhood. Though she attended this meeting, Sarah herself was critical of both police officers and her neighbors. I continued to meet Sarah at her home, during protests, in public areas and meetings, and helped her out as she dealt with various issues. I learned how Sarah navigated her daily social surroundings in Overtown, in particular her relationship with her next-door neighbor and local police officers, and how she used secrets to keep herself safe.

Marcus and Fenix, both African-American men, were hairdressers in a barbershop in Overtown. Marcus was around thirty and the owner of the shop, Fenix was a bit younger and had worked in the barbershop for a

couple of months when we met. They also lived in the same apartment complex, where Marcus lived with his wife and younger son, and Fenix with his aunt. I met Fenix in a nearby restaurant, where I was interviewing another interlocutor. Fenix was interested in my research, and became involved in the conversation, which happened to be about gentrification in the neighborhood. He invited me to the barbershop, where he introduced me to Marcus. Both were interested in my research in Miami, and the barbershop became a place for me to hang out regularly. It proved to be an excellent place for ethnographic research: not only could Marcus and Fenix continue their work during our conversations, but I was also able to speak to a diversity of customers, most of them residents of the neighborhood. This was useful for understanding local experiences and sentiments regarding police practices, private gun ownership, the use of mobile cameras, and interpersonal interactions and relationships in Overtown. Eventually, I developed a good relationship with both Marcus and Fenix, and continued to meet with them in and outside of the barbershop.

With the exception of Marcus and Fenix, none of the protagonists knew each other, although they might have encountered one another during work or in their free time. As an MPD police officer, Lux worked four days in Overtown, where she had also seen me with Fenix outside the barbershop. Sarah's residence was not far from Marcus and Fenix's workplace, and they could have run into each other at a store close by. Marcus and his friends sometimes went to South Beach, visiting bars on Ocean Drive, possibly including the one where Darius worked as a security guard. Olaf and I often went out for a drink in Wynwood, a neighborhood that Lux sometimes patrolled at night, and where Xecurity was looking to expand its business.

Although my research takes individuals rather than neighborhoods as its cases, my fieldwork was still limited to three very different, but geographically close and interconnected, parts of Miami: Overtown, Wynwood, and South Beach. See Figure 1.2 for a map of my research locations.

Overtown is a centrally located, low-income neighborhood close to Miami's Downtown district. It is locally known as an impoverished, high-crime area, and a place where predominantly Black residents live. In 2015, the city commissioner, Keon Hardemon, summarized the dominant reputation of the stigmatized area in a public meeting with local residents: "Overtown today is just a place where you can buy crack." During the Jim Crow era of racial apartheid, the neighborhood was known as "Colored Town": a small part of Miami where Black workers and artists were required to live. In spite of this history of violent segregation, current residents

Figure 1.2. Map of Miami, including locations of Wynwood, Overtown, and South Beach.

also remember the neighborhood as having a vibrant past, especially compared to what it has become today. In the 1960s, city officials decided to construct an overpass of the I-95 highway directly through Overtown, displacing thousands of local residents and disrupting local businesses (Connolly, 2014).

Bordering Overtown is the neighborhood of Wynwood, an increasingly popular area in Miami. With its art galleries, cafes, and restaurants, but most importantly its street art and murals, Wynwood attracts both local and international visitors and ranks among Miami's top attractions on various travel websites. Although small, Wynwood has become a brand, a synonym for Miami's "magical" transformation of empty and dead space into something new and exciting. Within the past decade, real estate developers have gentrified the neighborhood, making art galleries out of the warehouses where wealthy art collectors stored and displayed their possessions to the public (Garcia, 2017). These collectors were a main factor in the neighborhood's rapid growth, which eventually led business owners to open shops and restaurants in Wynwood. Today, Wynwood is known for being a young, energetic, and upcoming neighborhood, a place that is especially attractive for a younger public excited by its nightlife, dining, and shopping opportunities.

Many Miamians told me that South Beach is unlike the rest of Miami.

Officially, the neighborhood is also located in the City of Miami Beach, not the City of Miami. In practice, however, the two are often perceived to be part of one metropolitan area, even though you have to cross one of three causeways to get from the mainland to South Beach and vice versa. South Beach is the most southern part of the Miami Beach island and is primarily known for its nightlife, art deco architecture, entertainment, and of course, the beach. Drawing on widespread spatial imaginaries of South Beach, residents told me that the neighborhood is representative of Miami's "superficial hype" and "over-the-top craziness." As I discuss in the next chapter, it is also a neighborhood characterized by heavy policing. Police officers and private security guards constantly patrol the area, and their number drastically increases during certain events, such as Art Basel and Memorial Day weekend. Such moments illustrate that South Beach is not necessarily an exception to the power relations and practices of security provision seen elsewhere, and is indeed more similar to Overtown and Wynwood than many residents would like to believe.

In seeking to answer my main research question, I adopted an ethnographic approach in which I traced the individual storylines of these six protagonists in and across these Miami neighborhoods, and connected them to broader trends in security provision, self-defense, and the relevant laws and policies that shape the urban security context. I also became affiliated with police departments, civil rights organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, and private security companies. As I also discuss in the following sections, I was able to understand and contextualize these individuals and their storylines through numerous interactions and experiences with police officers, private security guards, and local residents in multiple situations, best conceptualized through the anthropological term of "deep hanging out". Both within and beyond their working environment, I spoke with police officers about their professional and private lives. I listened to officers and security guards discuss how they had dealt with issues they encountered in their work, and greeted recruits who saluted me in the morning as I came to visit their class. I observed conversations and interactions between police officers as I eventually was able to move with relative freedom within the MPD. I spent time with police instructors and security guards during lunches at the police station and during training sessions, and frequently interacted with security providers in the different neighborhoods. I attended public events and protests where local residents encountered police officers and spoke to all of them. Some security professionals showed me where they lived, where they worked off-duty (as I discuss further in Chapter Three), and talked about future career plans as a law enforcement officer or private security guard. Similarly, private security guards and local residents also discussed work-related issues, but also shared their thoughts on things they were struggling with at home and with friends, and on how they experienced larger developments in Miami. My experiences with the main security-related agencies offered a broader ethnographic context through which to understand security provision and the people involved in it.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION IN SECURITY AGENCIES

One Friday night around 9pm, I entered the MBPD police station on Washington Avenue, Miami Beach. After filling out several forms declaring that the police department would not in any way be legally accountable for any (lethal) injuries that I might sustain, I was able to pick a time and day for my first ride-along with a police officer. After I reported to the officer at the front desk, I was guided upstairs, where I waited for an officer to pick me up. I was greeted by several officers, who were curious who I was and why I wanted to join a patrol officer in Miami, so far away from home.

"Europe, eh?" one police officer summarized my response to his curiosity about where I lived. "So, how do you protect yourself, when, you know, you're in danger?" I had no direct answer to his question, and I said something along the lines of "I just hope I won't be in the wrong place at the wrong time, that nobody targets me." The officer sniffed and gave me a tightlipped smile. I felt naïve. "Boss," he addressed me, "when I get in trouble, I have this." He began to unbutton his shirt, revealing a necklace with a leather case attached to it, decorated with a large Christian cross. It holstered a knife. "And these," he went on, removing another knife from a holster attached to his ankle, and a third from his belt. After returning the knives to their holsters and tidying his collar, he wished me a good and eventful ride-along with the patrol officer.

This brief interaction with the MBPD officer was indicative of the relationships I would go on to develop with Miami's police officers and other respondents during my fieldwork. This was not primarily an interaction between a security provider and a visitor, but a conversation between two citizens of different nations. A conversation in which a citizen asked an outsider how he went about arranging his own protection, how he made use of the available rights and laws, and what responsibilities he felt. The MBPD officer wore a fully equipped tactical belt, including a firearm, a Taser, two additional magazines, a flashlight, and a clip that he used to mount his smartphone. He also had a radio that enabled him to

call his colleagues for back-up. Yet the officer also felt the need or desire to carry three additional knives for his personal protection. Because of my "European" background, some police officers were more willing to explain their perspectives to me and were more forgiving of my different interpretation of security and police work. Others considered my views to be naïve, and saw Europeans as mostly a "bunch of liberals" who did not understand the daily reality of security provision, especially not in the US.

I became affiliated with the two police departments in Miami with relative ease. Through personal contacts with the MBPD, and after contacting various commanding officers of the MPD, these two departments officially accepted me as a researcher. Many officers appeared open to the idea of having a researcher present, watching and talking to them during their work, and some even tried to involve me in their interactions with local residents. I was able to join patrol officers during day and night shifts, participate in classes with recruits, interview commanding officers, observe community policing projects in various neighborhoods and homeless outreach programs, train for SWAT swimming courses in a heavy suit, visit holding cells, join meetings with local residents, observe small-scale drug dealing on a corner while hiding in the bushes across the street, and participate during various other aspects of police training and courses for US citizens, such as crime scene investigations. In spite of the politically volatile times, and the increased scrutiny of police practices across the country, there seemed to be little hesitation to pair me with officers who had a reputation amongst their colleagues for being aggressive, a reputation that sometimes became apparent in their interactions with residents.

ACCESS AND POSITIONALITY

Throughout my research, I had to navigate relationships of authority and trust, and there were of course times that police officers were uncomfortable with my presence. Didier Fassin (2013: 17) translates a quote by Christian Mouhanna (2007), a French sociologist, when he states that "Any scrutiny or critical gaze based on in-depth knowledge of police circles represents a danger. Clearly, if the policy in force essentially aims not at modifying police practices but at improving the image of law enforcement bodies, the slightest divergence in analysis is likely to disturb the authorities." Especially in more volatile times, Fassin understands the sensitivity of this knowledge to be a key reason behind police departments' unwillingness to accept the involvement of external researchers and journalists, and an explanation for the difficulties he experienced in

establishing a working relationship with police departments in France. Miami police officers were also suspicious of an external gaze, of someone quite literally looking over their shoulders as they worked. In one instance, I was observing a training class, when a police instructor explained to his class that "the media is doing us absolutely no favors." Soon after this class, I was no longer able to continue my observations as the instructor felt uncomfortable with my presence.

It is understandable that the presence of a researcher causes anxiety, regardless of one's profession. You do not have to be a police officer to find it annoying when somebody asks questions about your work. However, I found that there was also a second factor that shaped my access to the two police departments: legal liability. Both the MBPD and MPD set a fixed number of times that I was allowed to join a patrol officer on duty. Their concern with liability did not automatically translate to measures directed at enhancing my personal safety, as I was never required to wear body armor, although the officer I accompanied sometimes did. Officers told me that they expected my relatives to sue the police department should I sustain injuries during a patrol shift. This, they believed, was why I had been given a limited number of hours, why I had to sign disclaimers and waivers before every shift, and why the community relations sergeant had to check my background for criminal offences every single time I wanted to join a patrol officer. Nevertheless, my research took place at a time when police departments were looking to "reinvent themselves", as Daniel Oates, Chief of the MBPD, told me. This meant that they were looking for a proper balance between transparency and the protection of sensitive information and police practices. I managed to benefit from this development, as I gained access to most of the MPD's and MBPD's main activities during my research.

In addition to navigating access and authority within the police departments, a main concern during my fieldwork in Miami was that I was becoming increasingly involved with individuals and groups who held antagonistic beliefs. I became affiliated with the Wynwood BID. I wore an official BID shirt and helped them conduct a small survey concerning the safety and overall satisfaction of visitors in Wynwood, and talked to developers who were looking to expand their activities in the neighborhood, while I also interviewed activists and joined protesters who sought to actively resist these processes of gentrification. I met with Marcus and Fenix in and outside of their barbershop, a site that Lux would drive by in her police car, and that I passed while doing a tour of the neighborhood with thirty police recruits. I sat with Darius at the entrance of the bar where residents of Overtown sometimes came to drink. All of the main protago-

nists were aware of my involvement in different neighborhoods and with different groups. I did, however, try to minimize being visibly associated with the police in Overtown, especially when a patrol officer reprimanded residents in a neighborhood through which I was going to bike the next day; the tinted windows of the police cars helped avoid some potentially awkward encounters.

In addition to police departments, I contacted two private security companies. Xecurity, a pseudonym for the main company featured in this dissertation, was active in South Beach and Wynwood. I talked to the owners of both companies, visited their offices and training facilities, and joined a batch of guards in training at a shooting range. These experiences were particularly useful for contextualizing my interactions with Darius, a security guard employed by Xecurity. In this dissertation, I draw more heavily on my observations and interactions with Miami's police officers than on my experiences with private security companies. This is primarily because of the significance of police officers in the provision of security, first and foremost because of their additional rights and associated socio-political status. In Miami, only law enforcement officers such as the police are able to make arrests, and there are specific laws and policies supporting police practices. In comparison, private security guards are often unarmed, and only allowed to act within set, predefined boundaries. In both popular culture and daily work, many people do not take the presence of private security guards too seriously, and some mockingly call them "rent-a-cop". Although they dress like police officers and act like police officers, they clearly are not. Most of the time, they are paid minimum wage, have no additional benefits, and are expected to work long and tiresome shifts that involve few to no clear goals other than to observe and call the police in case of an incident. While police officers are granted additional rights to use violence, private security guards are not. Instead, they have to rely on their "verbal judo" skills to make people leave the private property of their employer. Sometimes guards incite micro-violent interactions, so that they will be covered by insurance. For example, Darius told me that he strives to push any unwanted customer outside the iron fence, the boundaries of the private establishment, so that any repercussions could be legally interpreted as an "assault". From a legal standpoint, this would be a much better position for Darius should anyone want to press charges, and sue him and Xecurity. While such narratives relate directly to my conceptualization of legal imaginaries, many, if not all, Miamians are primarily concerned with citizen-police relationships and interactions.

Although I always introduced myself as a graduate student, many residents were unfamiliar with qualitative research and occasionally some became suspicious of who I was and why I was asking certain questions. My name, appearance as a tall White man, and research interests combined made it difficult for some to categorize me and to assess my integrity. I stood out in most settings. Except when I was with Olaf, my roommate with a somewhat similar style and height, I always felt out of place in Miami. One reason for this was because my appearance was generally not as "styled" or "clean" as that of many other Miamians. This was partly due to my work as an ethnographer, which required me to be outside, often on foot in the heat or on my bike. The respondents I would meet or interview, in contrast, often worked inside, wore business attire or fashionable pants and shirts, while I arrived in shorts. There were several people who jokingly commented on this, and although it made me feel uncomfortable at times, it seemed to also balance the "serious" scope and aim of my research and make my respondents more willing to discuss controversial issues.

While it was understandable that not everyone would be willing to discuss sensitive issues with a relative stranger like myself, the strong legal culture and suspiciousness seemed to play a larger role in shaping my interlocutors' responses. People were careful when engaging in certain debates and in verbalizing their answers. I was told that there were many private detectives in Miami, and that they did exactly what I was doing: asking questions. It took Alfredo, a good friend of mine, a graduate student and a local resident, six months to acquire the telephone number of one of his key respondents. Even though my appearance and position as a student allowed me to affiliate myself with various actors during my fieldwork, it took time and patience to explain my research and build relationships.

I moved around Miami by bike, and sometimes by car. Modes of transportation are strongly intertwined with class: pedestrians, cyclists, and those who rely on the city's cumbersome public transport are generally of a lower socio-economic background than those who can afford to use a car. Miami's car-based infrastructure and layout limit the mobility of those without one. While a bike proved to be essential in order to meet people and discover new places, at the same time it raised eyebrows. Who was this White man on a bike? Police officers explained to me that whenever they saw a White man in the streets of Overtown, they generally assumed he was there to buy and consume illegal drugs. They told me that there was a high likelihood that the police would stop me – although this never happened in practice. Some local residents also sought to point me in the right direction of where to buy such substances, but explained to me that I was safe in Overtown precisely because I was White. Marcus and Fenix

said I was seen as a potential and valuable customer, and drug dealers would look to protect any buyers in the neighborhood. While in practice, my actual behavior might counter such assumptions, my presence in all neighborhoods, but particularly in Overtown, was highly noticeable to both residents and visitors.

My appearance as a White man also affected my relationships with my key interlocutors, the main protagonists of this dissertation. In particular, Olaf and his family, and Darius appeared to feel more comfortable in disclosing their prejudices about, and displeasure with, Black residents. It was difficult for me to find a balance between distancing myself from their statements and stigmatizing beliefs on the one hand, while maintaining a good working relationship with them on the other. My appearance of course also shaped my interactions with Lux, Sarah, Marcus, and Fenix, all Black Miamians. My presence not only stood out, as I explained earlier, it also interfered with how my relationships with these protagonists developed. Lux, for example, told me that she wanted to go to law school. I asked if she wanted to use the degree to return to the MPD afterwards, perhaps to apply for a higher ranking position. She was careful in formulating her answer. "I don't want to offend you but... I think that would be for more lighter skinned people." Her words surprised me. It was late 2015 and I had been meeting with her on a more or less weekly basis for some six months and assumed she understood my interest in understanding and critiquing racism. I reassured her there was no way she could offend me by saying something like that. To me, it illustrated how difficult it was to develop a relationship with my protagonists in which racial inequality could be discussed openly. I had been meeting with Lux for quite some time, and still she did not feel comfortable expressing her concerns and beliefs to me. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these interlocutors appeared to be much more willing to discuss these issues with non-White residents or visitors (including a colleague of mine) who shared similar experiences and backgrounds.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation asks how Miamians enact and experience citizenship in the context of the changing governance of security. I answer this question by arguing that shared understandings of the law shape such acts and experiences, and that these understandings can best be conceptualized as legal imaginaries. Legal imaginaries may involve a specific relationship between notions of legality and legitimacy, and I explore how such imaginaries inform everyday security provision. In my case, influenced by the ideal type of citizenship that I call "vigilant citizenship", a product

of neoliberalization and precarity, Miamians have become primarily concerned with legality, the question of what is in accordance with the law. This means that legitimacy, the question of what should be legal, is of less importance. As a result, moral values and ethical codes increasingly become an outcome of legality rather than informing it. As I examine how legal imaginaries shape the ways Miamians enact and experience citizenship, I look into the ways such imaginaries are emplaced, embodied and materialized in the form of legal intimacies. In other words, by focusing on guns, cameras, and secrets, I take into account citizenship in both the public and the private sphere, and recognize how notions of legality enter personal lives.

In the next chapter, "Imagining Miami", I introduce Miami through its spatial imaginaries. I critically analyze the city's imaginary as a utopian, transnational city, an idealized perception of Miami that is reproduced in popular culture. I argue that this imaginary neglects structural developments that are indicative of its national context. The chapter discusses the privatization of security and racialized security practices, two national-level security trends that shape and define everyday life in the city. In contrasting the city's imaginaries with key security developments, I contribute to literature on Miami that shifts away from an exclusive focus on its migrant population groups and entertainment districts, connecting these dimensions with other, alternative realities of what is often said to be a Magic City.

In Chapters Three, Four, and Five, I discuss the "elements" of guns, cameras, and secrets, respectively. All of the protagonists in this dissertation owned a weapon, and some of them carried one in public, concealed or not. Through their daily acts and experiences, as well as local cases of gun violence, Chapter Three, "Guns", reflects on larger debates of private gun ownership, state laws, situating these in relation to theoretical understandings of individual agency and actor-network theory (e.g., Latour, 1994). In the US legal system, gun ownership and use are directly affected by court rulings, which in turn are legal qualifications of specific security encounters. Because they are widely available and inextricably entangled with notions of rights and responsibilities, guns are important to anthropological studies of daily security provision. I suggest that Miamians enact and experience their citizenship in important ways through the legal framework of private gun ownership. In practice, people navigate their responsibilities as citizens by differentiating between legal, desirable, and "good" gun use on the one hand, and illegal, undesirable, and "bad" gun use on the other, but also experience difficulty in making such distinctions. While rooted in legal

definitions, such ideas are also tied to racialized and shared understandings of when private gun ownership contributes to safety and when it does not.

In Chapter Four, "Cameras", I address the increasing popularity of mobile cameras and the recording of security encounters. Olaf had installed security cameras around our house that could be accessed online when he was at work. Marcus and Fenix recorded their interactions with police officers with a digital camera and their mobile phones. I connect these and other examples of everyday camera use to larger debates around police body cameras and videos of security encounters. I argue that it is best to understand camera use as a technique to make visible, and that cameras strengthen existing entanglements of legality and practices of visualization, and formulate new ones, creating what I call a "legal gaze". The legal gaze relates to similar constructs embedded in dominant visual cultures, specifically the "male gaze" (Mulvey, 1975) and the "tourist gaze" (Urry, 2002), indicating a particular, dominant way of seeing and interpreting. Rather than necessarily preventing altercations or violent incidents, I show that the use of, and reliance on, cameras in the context of security endorses the tendency to validate interpersonal interactions in legal terms, one that over-exposes individual accountability and under-exposes structural causes.

In the fifth chapter, "Secrets", I introduce secrets as an important aspect for understanding linkages between citizenship and security. This is partly because of state policies that encourage their constituents to share their secrets with them. While the possession of secrets is criminalized in public debates, it is also considered fundamental to everyday life. I study secrets in light of the idea of "lateral surveillance" (Reeves, 2017), a concept referring to government attempts to mobilize citizens for a diversity of security-related concerns, and have them surveil each other, to look and disclose secrets. I argue that through such policies, state agencies seek to shape political subject formation at a local level. Politicians and citizens alike both look to navigate between a "proper" measure of privacy and of transparency. Such navigations of citizenship rights and duties are individualized, fragmenting collectivities rather than supporting projects of shared political subjectivity.

In the conclusion, I draw together these discussions to analyze how legal imaginaries mediate everyday acts and experiences of citizenship and security provision. I combine the insights derived from the more empirical chapters on guns, cameras, and secrets in order to indicate in more general terms how vigilant citizenship is formed. This concluding chapter, titled "American Values?", also suggests the ways in which the concept legal imaginaries might be mobilized in contexts beyond security provision and

beyond the US. Shared understandings of the law affect governance and shape dimensions of citizen-state relationships, in a broad range of government domains and political geographies.