

# Value uncertainty

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# Outline

The preemptive impulse

A new security landscape

Evolution in the concept of security

Uncertainty and the rise of risk

The epistemology of the unknown

Security and values

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## The preemptive impulse

*If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path to action.*

George W. Bush  
13 September 2002

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# The preemptive impulse

Acceleration of political actions in *time*

Compression of *space*

Security is assured before the event

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## **A new security landscape**

Inflation of security

Commercialization of security

Technologies of security

Product differentiation

Globalization of security

Production of insecurity

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## **Evolution in the concept of security**

Antiquity  
Middle Ages  
Cold War  
Post-Cold War

## Uncertainty and the rise of risk

Security is a kind of *knowledge* about the future.

Security is less about the known than about the unknown.

Security knowledge is always inadequate

Risk: the reality of security is what *could* happen

*The precautionary principle*

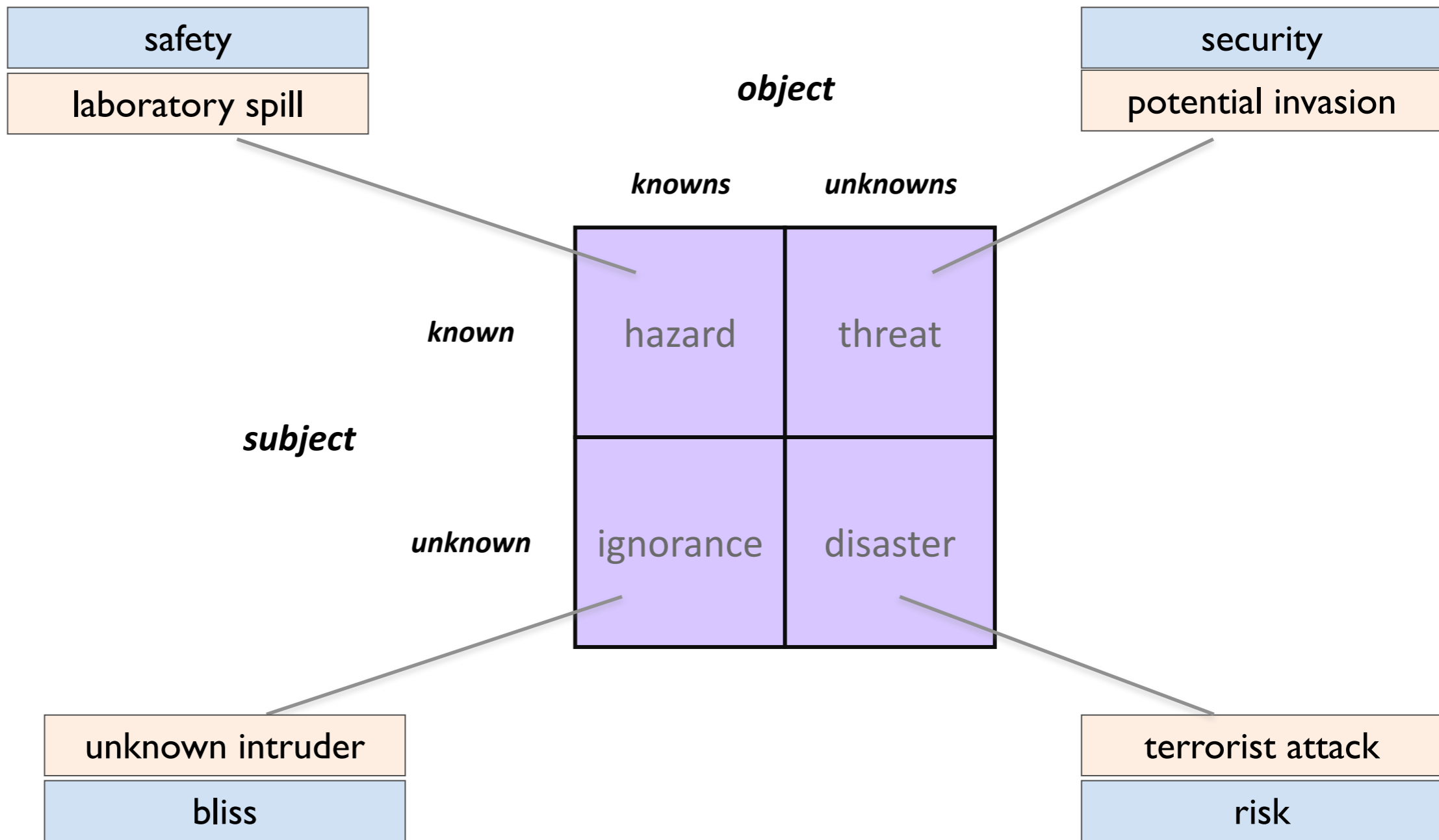
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## The Unknown

As we know,  
There are known knowns.  
There are things we know we know.  
We also know  
There are known unknowns.  
That is to say  
We know there are some things  
We do not know.  
But there are also unknown unknowns,  
The ones we don't know  
We don't know.

Donald Rumsfeld at a press conference of the Department of  
Defence, 12. February 2002 (Seely, 2003: 2)





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## **Security and values**

Managing insecurity, not eliminating it

Security and materiality

Security is managed through projection of values  
political, social, cultural, etc.

Security is reflexive:

About the threatened,  
as much as about the threat

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