



Human Security

Edward Newman

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Summary

Human security suggests that security policy and security analysis, if they are to be effective and legitimate, must focus on the individual as the referent and primary beneficiary. In broad terms, human security is “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear.” positive and negative rights as they relate to threats to core individual needs. Human security is normative; it argues that there is an ethical responsibility to (re)orient security around the individual in line with internationally recognized standards of human rights and governance. Much human security scholarship is therefore explicitly or implicitly underpinned by a solidarist commitment to moral obligation, and some are cosmopolitan in ethical orientation. However, there is no uncontested definition of, or approach to, human security, though theorists generally start with human security challenges to orthodox neorealist conceptions of international security. Nontraditional and critical security studies (which are distinct from human security scholarship) also challenges the neorealist orthodoxy as a starting point, although generally from a more sophisticated theoretical standpoint than found in the human security literature. Critical security studies can be conceived broadly to embrace a number of different nontraditional approaches which challenge conventional (military, state-centric) approaches to security studies and security policy. Human security has generally not been treated seriously within these academic security studies debates, and it has not contributed much either.

Keywords: [human security](#), [critical security studies](#), [human security studies](#), [neorealism](#), [international security](#), [nontraditional and critical security studies](#)

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