

Chapter 11

Evolution of Security Studies and the Resulting Perspectives of an Asteroid Threat



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11.1 Introduction

How can we translate a threat we are able to identify by scientific means into a policy action, and what dilemmas are raised by following the logic of evidence? This chapter takes a broader perspective on planetary defense as a security studies case (in political science) and aims to reconcile *rational* and *interpretative* thinking. This reconciliation can be achieved by discussing the topic in terms of *pragmatic* thinking, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

While rational thinking tends to express the world around us using scientific means only—for example, when we apply math to physics to explain how the world works—interpretative thinking assesses the normative implications of our decisions: “Does this solution lead to a better desired future?” Normative thinking poses questions about whether certain actions and their outcomes can be perceived as good, desirable or permissible, or as bad, undesirable or impermissible. I will use more than one theoretical approach combining rational scientific facts with several critical theoretical approaches enriched by some recent ideas concerning the pragmatic turn in security studies. The pragmatic turn in normative thinking provides us with tools to interpret the world contextually. Thus, normative assessments of certain actions become related to context, not as standalone, unreconcilable statements.

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