## I affirm. Part 1: Wake Up

#### [Reid-Brinkley & ROJ] CURRENT DEBATE RENDERS REAL VIOLENCE INVISIBLE – it distances us from actual harm by focusing on improbable extinction scenarios.

Reid-Brinkley: Reid-Brinkley, Dr. Shanara. [Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Co-Director of Forensics at California State University, Fullerton] “The Harsh Realities of ‘Acting Black’: How African-American Policy Debaters Negotiate Representation Through Racial Performance and Style.” University of Georgia, Spring 2008. CV/CH

Genre Violation Four: Policymaker as Impersonal and the Rhetoric of Personal Experience. Debate is a competitive game. 112 It requires that its participants take on the positions of state actors (at least when they are affirming the resolution). Debate resolutions normally call for federal action in some area of domestic or foreign policy. Affirmative teams must support the resolution, while the negative negates it. The debate then becomes a “laboratory” within which debaters may test policies. 113 Argumentation scholar Gordon Mitchell notes that “Although they may research and track public argument as it unfolds outside the confines of the laboratory for research purposes, in this approach students witness argumentation beyond the walls of the academy as spectators, with little or no apparent recourse to directly participate or alter the course of events.” 114 Although debaters spend a great deal of time discussing and researching government action and articulating arguments relevant to such action, what happens in debate rounds has limited or no real impact on contemporary governmental policy making. And participation does not result in the majority of the debate community engaging in activism around the issues they research. Mitchell observes that the stance of the policymaker in debate comes with a “sense of detachment associated with the spectator posture.” 115 In other words, its participants are able to engage in debates where they are able to distance themselves from the events that are the subjects of debates. Debaters can throw around terms like torture, terrorism, genocide and nuclear war without blinking. Debate simulations can only serve to distance the debaters from real world participation in the political contexts they debate about. As William Shanahan remarks: …the topic established a relationship through interpellation that inhered irrespective of what the particular political affinities of the debaters were. The relationship was both political and ethical, and needed to be debated as such. When we blithely call for United States Federal Government policymaking, we are not immune to the colonialist legacy that establishes our place on this continent. We cannot wish away the horrific atrocities perpetrated everyday in our name simply by refusing to acknowledge these implications” (emphasis in original). 116 The “objective” stance of the policymaker is an impersonal or imperialist persona. The policymaker relies upon “acceptable” forms of evidence, engaging in logical discussion, producing rational thoughts. As Shanahan, and the Louisville debaters’ note, such a stance is integrally linked to the normative, historical and contemporary practices of power that produce and maintain varying networks of oppression. In other words, the discursive practices of policyoriented debate are developed within, through and from systems of power and privilege. Thus, these practices are critically implicated in the maintenance of hegemony. So, rather than seeing themselves as government or state actors, Jones and Green choose to perform themselves in debate, violating the more “objective” stance of the “policymaker” and require their opponents to do the same.

Thus, the Role of the Judge is to Promote Real World Orientations in the Debate Space, which means we consider high-probability impacts to actual people over low-probability scenarios, regardless of magnitude.

#### [Bledsoe & Wright & ROB] And racial capitalism is a root cause of structural violence in the squo.

**Bledsoe & Wright:** Bledsoe, Adam [Department of Geography, Florida State University], and Willie Jamaal Wright [Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Rutgers University]. “The anti-Blackness of global capital.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 37, Issue 1, 8–26, 2019. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0263775818805102> CH

The world is living through a moment in which hyper-visualized examples of anti-Black violence have gripped the public and spurred discourses around Black life and its prevailing (lack of) value (Akuno, 2015; Ferreira da Silva, 2017; Sharpe, 2016). From Ferguson to Baltimore to Charleston to New York to Minneapolis to Orlando to Rio de Janeiro, highly publicized images of the murder of Black women, men, children, and transgendered people have forced academics and lay people alike to reflect on the material and immaterial factors that have created the world in which we currently live. The discipline of Geography has begun to attend to the issue of anti-Blackness in present-day constitutions of space (Derickson, 2016; Eaves, 2016; McCutcheon, 2016; Pulido, 2017). Environment and Planning: D, specifically, has reserved space for geographical engagements with current forms of anti-Blackness and the responses to it. These engagements have yielded important interventions by Deborah Cowen, Nemoy Lewis, and Brian Jordan Jefferson, which have addressed the issue of anti-Blackness in unique ways. Cowen and Lewis (2016) offer an analysis of internal colonialism, arguing that the “Black ghetto” remains a space of colonial administration and imperial violence that take shape through gentrification, the subprime mortgage crisis, the suburbanization of displaced Black communities, and the intense policing of Black peoples that necessarily occurs as part of such processes. Jefferson, on the other hand, explores how renewed rounds of Black murder help to reify racial hierarchy for White populations facing structural insecurity like increased unemployment, fears of “terroristic” violence, increased drug and alcohol abuse, and suicides (Jefferson, 2016). Both essays draw on prevailing political economic trends to help explain present manifestations of premature Black death. We seek to carry these conversations forward by offering new explanations of the connections between political economy and anti-Blackness within the context of the United States and abroad.

They add:

Of the many political economic factors effecting Black populations in the United States, neither gentrification, deindustrialization, capital flight, nor any other such phenomenon develop by chance (Lees, 2000, 2012; Moskowitz, 2017; Paton, 2014). Rather, these processes are all part of a much larger trend within the global economy that results in a spatial, economic, and cultural reorganization of society. This new ordering of our globe happens in accord with ever-innovating forms of capitalism. Gentrification, in particular, has come to comprise “an increasingly unassailable capital accumulation strategy” by weaving “global financial markets together with large- and medium-sized real-estate developers” (Smith, 2002: 443). As capitalism enacts new rounds of accumulation through practices like gentrification, its purveyors (e.g., real estate developers, financiers, and municipal leaders) must find or create favorable conditions for that accumulation. Thus policies, relations, and regulatory identities that once inhibited the free flow of capital (tariffs, unions, Keynesian modes of governance, localized non-capitalist practices, etc.) are increasingly manipulated and done away with to facilitate new rounds of accumulation (Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Moskowitz, 2017). As a result, human and nonhuman beings are increasingly at the mercy of capitalism and its exploitations, expropriations, and expulsions (Sassen, 2014). These oppressive spatial processes continually affect Black populations. The spatial fix—described by David Harvey (2001)—preserves and propagates capitalism and also entails a racial fix(ation) as the continuation of accumulation treats certain places and populations as obsolete, in need of appropriation, removal, and erasure. For example, in the midst of efforts to accumulate surplus value through real estate development via the gentrification of Black communities, municipalities attempt to appease Black communities and capitalize on Black cultural/spatial expressions by hemming Black histories into museums as they eradicate the makers of Black history. The African American Library at the Gregory School in Houston’s Fourth Ward, the Houston Museum of African American Culture in Houston’s Third Ward, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. are examples of this phenomenon. Each cultural hub emerged as the neighborhoods and cities in which they are located underwent forms of gentrification that dislocated many Black residents and history makers.

**Thus,** the **Role of the Ballot** is to **Resist Racial Capitalism**, which requires endorsing a method for rejecting anti-Black economic structures in our approaches to the topic – comes first, since this controls the link to other impacts.

## Part 2:

#### [Somin] Eminent domain has a historically racist past – it was even called “negro removal”.

**Somin**: Somin, Alison. [Legal Fellow, Center for the Separation of Powers, Pacific Legal Foundation] “Eminent Domain and Race” *The Federalist Society,* October 7. 2015. JP

Eminent domain is in the news again because of ever-controversial presidential candidate Donald Trump's remarks that the condemnation of property for transfer to private developers is “a wonderful thing" and that "nobody knows [eminent domain] better than I do" (one imagines Richard Epstein dusting off boxing gloves). Plenty of other commentators, including my husband Ilya Somin and Reason magazine's Matt Welch, have ably pointed to many problems with Trump's most recent statements. **But one reason why eminent domain is often less than wonderful is its sordid racial history and continued disproportionate effects on racial and ethnic minorities**. A bit more than a year ago, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights published a report, The Civil Rights Implications of Eminent Domain Abuse, that explores these very important topics. The tone of the report is deliberately modest because much of the case for and against the kinds of takings authorized by Kelo v. New London turns on factors outside of the Civil Rights Commission's traditional purview. But to give readers a sense of the issues at stake, I quote from Commissioner Gail Heriot's\* statement: "I... found this briefing topic worthy of study because eminent domain’s racially adverse effect seems counterintuitive to many people.[1] **Conventional wisdom has it that robust judicial protections of property rights redound only to the benefit of wealthy and privileged groups, and that ever-more-powerful government will always be the friend of the poor and historically discriminated against**.[2] The story told in this briefing report counsels otherwise. In the nineteenth century, protecting the property rights of freed slaves was seen as a crucial means of securing meaningful freedom for them. Professor David Beito’s testimony quoted Frederick Douglass on the subject: “We hold the civil government to be solemnly bound to protect the weak against the strong, the oppressed against the oppressor, the few against the many, and to secure the humblest subject in the full possession of his rights of person and of property.”[1] (Italics added.) The framers of the Fourteenth Amendment took similar views. They worried that Southern state and local governments would threaten the property rights of freed slaves and those whites who supported the Union and therefore understood private property to be one of the core rights to be protected by the Amendment.[2] Widespread use of eminent domain did not appear as a major challenge to traditional conceptions of property rights for another several decades, when early twentieth century progressives became interested in strategies for improving American cities. To put the point gently, most did not share the racial sensibilities and multiculturalist ideals of twenty-first century progressives. Instead, these advocates sought to make cities more “rational” by displacing members of undesirable racial and ethnic groups who they believed impeded “hygienic” or “scientific” urban development. The term “blight,” which Progressive intellectuals borrowed from botany, in effect likened the spread of such people to invasive plant diseases.[3] The 1954 landmark Berman v. Parker decision, which authorized a broad conception of “public use,” reflected decades of sustained efforts by these advocates to reshape the jurisprudence of eminent domain to achieve their goals more easily.[4] The neighborhood of southwest Washington, D.C., in which the Berman condemnations took place was also overwhelmingly African-American.[5] Advocates for the prominent redevelopment projects of mid-century were often quite up front about their intentions to use urban renewal projects for racially discriminatory ends. **As quoted in the body of this report, displacement of African-Americans and urban renewal projects were so intertwined that urban renewal was referred to as “Negro removal.”[**6] In Chicago in the 1940s, protesters claimed that the “Lake Meadows” re-development project on the near Southside was “Negro clearance” rather than “slum clearance” and said, “If it is a slum clearance program, then let’s make it that and start where the slums are.” Although their complaints delayed the project, these efforts ultimately did not stop the clearance of the area.[7] In New York, a leading proponent of the 1940s “Stuyvesant Town” redevelopment project, Metropolitan Life Insurance Chairman Frederick Ecker, infamously defended the company’s decision to deny admission to blacks by declaring that “blacks and whites just don't mix.”[8] One study reports that, between 1949 and 1973, government officials executed 2,532 projects in 992 cities, displacing one million people, two-thirds of whom were African American. [9] **Eminent domain use displaced African Americans five times more often than their representation in the nation’s population.[10]**

#### [Mellon and Wille] The logic of eminent domain is now in space – the idea that humans can decide who national resources belong to furthers racial capitalism.

**Mellon and Wille:** Melon, Christopher. [Writer at New America] Wille, Denis. [Writer at New America] “Property Rights in Space Sounds Great, Until We're Actually There” *New America,* 2019. JP

Ty Franck: **And the entire concept of eminent domain. In a western when they were laying down railroad tracks, the government would just come and say, "we own X amount of land on either side of these tracks." And it didn't matter who was there before. And it still happens today. If the state decides to run a freeway through your yard, they will just use eminent domain to take your house away from you. So that idea of government giving themselves the right to just decide who things belong to**. Chris Mellon: Absolutely. And I was wondering as I read that book whether you had been looking at the UN Outer Space Treaty and other sorts of sources. It strikes me that Cibola draws out really well a lot of the ambiguities around how property is currently conceived of in space—particularly this issue of having a supranational organization like the UN license someone and grant them settlement rights vs. a much more traditional, natural law idea of use and occupation. You know, the refugees from Ganymede are already there. Daniel Abraham: We were aware of a lot of the laws, some of the treaties in place now, and some of the confusion about that. But a lot of what we were pulling from was historical precedent. And a lot of what we were talking about were things that have played out on the surface of the planet over time and abstracting them forward into the issues of a land rush. There have been plenty of situations in which there was a tremendous amount of wealth suddenly available, and there were conflicting narratives about exactly who deserved it, who had a right to it, and who was willing to kill how many people to get it. And all of that seems of a piece to us so that the expansion of those issues out into space—with a few asymmetries—really does kind of rhyme with the past. **Ty Franck: I think it's really easy to make laws like "nobody gets to claim a celestial body" when it's a thing that's unlikely to happen because we can't go there. I think, when you get a bunch of settlements on some place like the moon or Mars, you're going to have to revisit that**. There were a bunch of different countries that had settlements in North America. No one country could claim the whole thing. But, the minute there were enough of us here in North America to sort of decide we should be our own country, that changed. And now, most of North America is Canada and the United States. I think those "none of us can claim it" things...when you get a bunch of people living on Mars they're going to have an opinion on that. On the asteroid side, all of this goes away when there's money. **The minute that somebody finds a way to actually make money using those rocks, all of the rules are going to change.** It's just a fact. Because the minute somebody pulls a trillion dollars in platinum out of an asteroid, some government is going to want to tax that. We're not just going to be okay with some random guy suddenly being richer than most of the countries on earth because he found a platinum asteroid. All of these rules, I think, look great on paper. They sound great right up until we're actually doing it. And then we're completely rewriting that rule book. Daniel Abraham: To go back to what Ty was saying, all of the rules about how nobody can own a celestial body are very easy when nobody can actually practicably own a celestial body. I don't know how well that’ll stand up. Ty Franck: Yeah, that feels like making rules about theoretical things. And rules about theoretical things always fall apart when the thing becomes real. **When you can't actually build a base on Mars, you can make as many rules about who's allowed to build a base on Mars as you want because there's no consequences to them.** The minute that those rules have consequences, I think they'll change. Dennis Wille: What final messages would you like to give people who maybe haven't seen or read the books? What do we need to be thinking about now that helps us set the conditions for the themes and the philosophy that you laid out in the books? Daniel Abraham: Well, I think that, if you look at the themes and philosophies in the books, one of the most consistent things throughout all of them is a real skepticism of tribalism and tribal affiliation as a basis for human culture. It's something we've always done, and it's always come with a terrible price. **Moving into space, we have the opportunity to reconsider what it is to be human—to be part of a group. And it would be a terrible crisis to miss.**

**[McKinson] And it’s only increasing –** futuristic ideas justify racism and colonialism in the name of “exploration”.

**Mckinson**: Mckinson, Kimberly D. [Writer for Anthropology Magazine Sapiens] “Do Black Lives Matter in Outer Space?", Sapiens, September 30th, 2020. JB

**The year 2020 has tragically shown, however, that for African Americans, among others around the globe, the insecurity and inhospitableness of life on Earth is not imagined as a future eventuality. Rather, it is already being lived as a present-day reality. Furthermore, the recent spread of Black Lives Matter protests to major international cities has reminded people that the tentacles of anti-Black racism do not simply limit their reach to the United States. Black Lives Matter is not just an American cry. It is a global movement that speaks to a planetary crisis rooted in the historic negation of the humanity of all Black people. Though SpaceX is a private company with its sights fixated on colonizing an ecology beyond the bounds of Earth’s atmosphere, it is nonetheless implicated in these contestations about racism. Space exploration is not and has never been politically neutral. As the history of the space race shows, the dream of colonizing space has always been tied to narratives about domination and greatness. In the U.S., the historic NASA workforce has largely been White and male.** As writer Mark Dery noted in a groundbreaking essay about Afrofuturism**, such men seem to believe they possess the power to design, own, and control “the unreal estate of the future.” These narratives are not unlike the ones of Euro-American colonization and imperialism on Earth, which are stories of the exploitation, exclusion, and dehumanization** of Black people, other people of color, and Indigenous people **in the name of exploration, adventure, and expansion by White people. Today the scions of space colonization are the billionaire entrepreneurs who have founded commercial spaceflight companies—Musk (SpaceX), Jeff Bezos (Blue Origin), and Sir Richard Branson (Virgin Galactic**). In other words**, they are no longer political leaders from ideologically opposed nation-states, as they were during the Cold War. They are still, however, privileged and wealthy White men.** (The combined net worth of Musk, Bezos, and Branson is over US$273 billion.) **Their endeavors to colonize Mars and their fantasies for the future of humankind must be understood in the context of the racialized histories of colonization on Earth.**

## Thus, I affirm:

#### [Gangawat] Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust.

**Gangawat:** Gangawat, Amanya. [Amity University Kolkata] “Re-exploring Terra Nullius and Property Rights in Space: Could a Lunar Settlement Claim the Lunar Estate?” *Advanced Space Law,* 2020. JP

**Since such an initiative requires a lot of funding, individuals must not be given the right to own a Moon plot**. However, they can visit the space with the help of such Corporations. **Since the principle followed in outer space is the concept of res communis, these private entities must be created and funded by individuals, but they must collaborate with the government.** Inthe past two decades, through a combination of technology, policy, and will, governments of more than a dozen countries have successfully transferred many space operations to the private sector, and it has yielded good results. Hence, there is a need to create a treaty that the Nation- State must consent to and be a party and make a collaborative effort to specialize such entities. It must be noted that the proposed regime does not favour private entities as a whole. Instead, it impresses upon the fact that Nations’ Collaborative efforts can open future prospects without providing much harm. However, a complete understanding of Nation-states is required for this 20 Advanced Space Law, Volume 6, 2020 Re-exploring Terra Nullius and Property Rights in Space: Could a Lunar Settlement Claim the Lunar Estate? by Amanya Shree Gangawat purpose. If each state start building their own Corporation, such a proposed regime would be a complete failure. **Hence, instead of claiming lands on the lunar estate, such objects in outer space must be utilized for the greater good and for the larger masses. Now, a question can be raised, that not everyone will be able to afford it, then the answer to this question is that, when Nations collaborate together, they must resort to the solution of using such technology which adheres to this question**. There must also be guidelines governing such entities to avoid any conflict and establish a Dispute Resolution Body in case of any dispute. Moreover, there is a need for all Nations to come forward and make a ban on such individuals’ claims. There must also be legislation banning all such individual’s claims on the plot of the Moon. The proposed regime requires a two-tire support system from: i) private entities and government and ii) cooperation among governments in order to be implemented effectively; iii) there should be no discrimination based on the capacity, power, or economy of the State. Each State must have equal rights in respect of this purpose. Once the requirement is fulfilled, the proposed regime can act to leverage the new frontier’s opening. Throughout the discussion, we find that the land on the Moon can benefit society as a whole. **It can also be concluded that the principle followed in outer space is that of res communis, which means it is the common heritage of mankind.** Hence, collaboration with private entities is essential for the purpose of capacity building and cost reduction. Most countries like Ukraine, India, the USA, Russia, UK have signed and ratified the “Outer Space Treaty,” which makes it impossible for any person to lay claim on a piece of land in space legally. According to this Treaty, outer space, which includes Moon and other celestial bodies, is common to all mankind, and therefore it cannot be owned by any nation. To maintain a balance between the development of the society and Natural resources, as well as to benefit all, one can take resort to the above-proposed regime. This can open a new frontier through private entities and the government’s initiatives at the National level and increase the cooperation among governments at the International level. With new affordable spaceflight technologies on the horizon, such activity in space will be a possibility in the near future. Therefore, to conclude, one can use the lunar estate, for the benefit of all, but one cannot sell a plot of Moon, of which he himself is not the owner, and any such person claiming such land on the basis of a document is unforce able. **Moreover, a settlement is a better option than just claiming a random land on the lunar surface.**

## Part 3:

#### [McKinnis] Declaring the appropriation of space as unjust changes the dynamic – it shifts the goal away from profit and colonization.

**McKinnis:** McKinnis, Sarah. [Writer at The Politic] “Who Owns the Moon?: Capitalism in Outer Space” *The Politic,* 2020. JP

**Even now, before any country or individual has legal claim to the Moon, there is money being made off of the desire to own the land.** Dennis Hope has made about $12 million by selling the Moon, as well as other planets in our solar system, which he lays claim to without any legal backing. He started in 1980, writing to the UN to inform them of his claim; he sees it as undisputed because the UN never responded. Hope believes he is justified by a loophole in the original Outer Space Treaty, but lawyers say he has no legal backing. **Despite this, a reported seven million people have given their money to this scam, including the aides of two former presidents; Carter and Reagan both “own” lunar land, and an unnamed customer bought land for George W. Bush. Hope’s website claims itself as “the only recognized world authority for the sale of lunar and other planetary real estate in the known solar system”; currently, acres of the Moon that are ten miles from the Apollo 11 landing site are selling for $49.99 per acre, with an extra $2.50 to add a name to the deed. Hope is also selling the entire planet of Pluto for $250,000, for which he has had no takers as of yet.** It’s a relatively harmless scam that demonstrates the ambiguity and extent to which the current space laws are overdue for reform. When it comes to talking seriously about property rights in space, the need for thoughtful, comprehensive reform is one that will become more and more urgent as capabilities increase. Even now, space powers are working to mine asteroids, which contain water and other materials that could benefit life on Earth, as well as the search to go beyond. In the summer of 2018, a Japanese spacecraft reached an asteroid and blasted small holes in the surface in an attempt to collect samples, and NASA has also been studying how to do this. In the long term, the structures for which the U.S. government is advocating will likely foment competition and rivalry once powers have established claims of sovereignty over areas of the Moon and other celestial bodies; this is in stark contrast to the cooperative environment that they initially hoped to foster when establishing NASA as a civilian agency. Indeed, the plaque left on the Moon, attached to the Apollo 11 Lunar Module reads, “We came in peace for all mankind.” However, the U.S. may be failing to pursue avenues that will allow these words of peace and unity to ring true in future missions. **The possibility of the exploitation of these resources is not, at its core, truly a problem with the space regulations but a continuation of the unequal systems we sustain on Earth. We have seen privilege and inequality invade this realm when it comes to space tourism, but, hopefully, there is still time to reimagine what the use of space resources could look like**. This requires moving past the idealistic treaties we have now and toward a set of guidelines that the major space powers are willing to sign and ratify. It remains to be seen whether a better agreement will be reached in this international political environment, especially when a new treaty is not even something that many space officials, lawyers, and analysts support. However, technology and space capabilities have advanced so much since the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and since the most recent UN agreement—the 1979 Moon Agreement. **This requires an advance in the way international governance institutions and individual countries think about outer space property rights. It also requires a shift away from the capitalist view of land and natural resources—instead choosing a perspective similar to the idea held in Indigenous communities and by others who believe that land is not something that at its core can be bought and sold, a perspective that encompasses much more respect and reverence for these natural resources.**

#### [Temmen] And justifying private appropriation enables a vision that is designed for the few and for the wealthy, instead of for the public’s benefit.

**Temmen:** Temmen, Jens [Writer for Politic & Society] “Why Billionaires in Space Are Not Going to Make The World A Better Place”, P&S, July 14th, 2021. RP

The question ignores the fact that **contrary to what the private space industry (and national space agencies, for that matter) wants us to believe, the exploration and colonization of outer space is a very terrestrial undertaking.** **Steeped in capitalism – a system that** **Branson, Musk and Bezos have mastered and thrived in – and the geopolitical stratagems of Earth’s nation-states, space exploration today is not so much driven by changing humanity as it goes into space, but rather by changing outer space to make it fit into the logics of profit and territorial control on Earth.** And we are in the thick of it: Branson’s latest attempt to establish space travel as a new branch of the tourism industry is just one of many recent steps – including the establishment of US Space Force, the ratification of the Artemis Accords, and the signing on of Musk’s SpaceX as a contractor for NASA – to make outer space safe for capitalism. **The point of the performative character of the billionaires’ space race, the images of grandeur and individualism, the bells and whistles, its alleged subscription to a more just future for humanity, is to distract, then. It is a shiny packaging that wraps-up and obscures the mundane fact that if colonizing outer space is allegedly about fundamentally changing societally structures that govern Earth and humanity, the New Space Entrepreneurs are certainly not the ones to bring about that change – it would simply be against their self-interest**. In Earth’s past and present, the colonial language of virgin land and terra nullius served to obscure the human cost of colonization by dehumanizing colonized peoples. **Space exploration, as imagined by Branson, Musk and Bezos, also has a cost. The wealth that all three of them have acquired through their business ventures, which puts them into the position to reach for the stars (and greater profits), builds on unleashed neoliberalism, capitalist exploitation, and, overall, less-than altruistic business models.** **Their vision of humanity in space is likewise designed for the few and wealthy, and built on the back of the many. And the cost could increase even further. While all of humanity is facing the unprecedented threat of climate change**, **which urges us to find sustainable solutions fast,** **Elon Musk and others offer us the seemingly quick fix of abandoning Earth altogether and to weather out the storm on Mars. In spite of being completely unfeasible from a scientific standpoint**, the idea has still gained traction among techno liberalists, and is thus withdrawing attention and resources from communities mostly in the Global South for whom climate change is not a threat in the distant future**.**

#### [Reimann] Private appropriation only furthers economic disparity by putting profit over lives – instead of money going towards improving problems like hunger on earth, money is funneled into space exploration.

**Reimann:** Reimann, Nicholas. [Forbes Business Writer] “Leaving A Planet In Crisis: Here’s Why Many Say The Billionaire Space Race Is A Terrible Idea”, *Forbes* 2021. JP

**The driving force behind space travel has shifted away from its long history of massive government projects to private industry over the past few years**. SpaceX’s May 2020 launch of two NASA astronauts from Kennedy Space Center in Florida marked the first manned launch from U.S. soil since 2011, with SpaceX becoming the first private company to send astronauts to the International Space Station during the same mission. Musk’s company has since been chosen as the sole company that will create spacecraft for NASA’s upcoming Artemis mission to send astronauts back to the Moon, beating out Blue Origin for the contract. **But the shift to privatization hasn’t just put billionaire’s companies at the forefront of scientific achievements—it’s accelerated the push for space tourism programs, which for now come with price tags solely restricted to the ultrawealthy. There’s also already been talk of luxury space hotels.** Orbital Assembly Corp. announced plans earlier this year for a 280-guest hotel called Voyager Station, which it said will open in 2027. The company hopes to work with SpaceX as a partner on the project. **$6 billion. That’s how much money it would take to save 41 million people set to die of hunger this year worldwide, according to UN World Food Program Executive Director David Beasley.** Beasley sent a tweet late last month urging Musk, Branson and Bezos to team up to fight hunger, saying, “We can solve this quickly!”

#### [Chan] Stop with the “for the greater good” bs - justifying appropriation means justifying Bezos’s treatment towards his employees in favor of a “greater good” that is just the elite.

On April 24, Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon, gave a wide-ranging, 48-minute interview with German digital publisher Axel Springer. He talked about how big tech companies like Amazon ought to be scrutinized, solving transient homelessness, and the lessons he learned from his grandfather, who once pulled 10-year-old Bezos aside to dispense memorable coming-of-age wisdom — that “it’s harder to be kind than clever.” But what the Twittersphere latched onto, following the interview’s publication on Business Insider four days later on April 28, is the moment in which Bezos — now the richest person in the world, and the first person to be valued at a three-digit net worth in the billions — tells his audience how he intends to spend most of his wealth: “The only way that I can see to deploy this much financial resource is by converting my Amazon winnings into space travel.” Were we watching a movie about an eccentric billionaire, his proclamation would seem hardly controversial. But since this is real life and the world is freighted with inequity, many on Twitter found his logic unconscionable. “[J]ust to get this straight,” tweeted editor and writer John Freeman on May 1, “the richest man on the planet, would rather go to space, to fucking space, then [sic] pay taxes so the government could feed the poor, take care of the elderly, heal veterans, and do all the things the federal government does…” **Journalist David Sirota pointed out the irony of Bezos investing in space when “a sizable amount of Jeff Bezos’ workforce is paid so little that they need to rely on food stamps.”** New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof gamely suggested an alternative: “Or @JeffBezos could use his fortune to make primary education universal worldwide, singlehandedly ending global illiteracy, changing the world forever. Now that would be a moonshot!” ADVERTISEMENT In invoking the moonshot, Kristof borrows a term from the tech industry, referring to big problems that would inspire radical but potentially feasible technological solutions — a term that is, in turn, inspired by President John F. Kennedy’s famous speeches to Congress and the American public in the early 1960s, marking the beginning of America’s space race against the Soviet Union. For Bezos — whose aerospace company Blue Origin, like fellow billionaire Elon Musk’s SpaceX, aims to make spaceflight commercially viable through recyclable rockets — the moonshot is literal. **If tech billionaires like Bezos and Musk seem to be completely divorced from the realities on the ground, it’s because their wealth — at net worth $130.2 billion and $19.6 billion respectively — gives them the unfathomable freedom to think at a scale and timeframe that the rest of us cannot afford to.** Bezos plans to continue liquidating roughly $1 billion a year of Amazon stock to fund Blue Origin because he predicts that humanity’s great flourishing will be inevitably stymied by an energy crisis in a few hundred years. Bezos predicts our descent into a “civilization of stasis” and believes it can be averted only by moving beyond our home planet. “The solar system can easily support a trillion humans,” reasons Bezos, “and if we had a trillion humans, we would have a thousand Einsteins and a thousand Mozarts and unlimited, for all practical purposes, resources and solar power and so on. That's the world that I want my great-grandchildren's great-grandchildren to live in.” Interested in Culture articles? Thanks for the feedback! This helps us improve your experience. If tech billionaires like Bezos and Musk seem to be completely divorced from the realities on the ground, it’s because their wealth gives them unfathomable freedom. Is there a place for the great-grandchildren’s great-grandchildren of the poor and ordinary in this future universe? To say that tech billionaires like Bezos are apathetic to the problems of common folk because they're too rich, too insular, too selfish, too singularly interested in endeavors that turn a profit, or too eager to cement their personal legacy for human posterity, belies a much more practical calculus: **Many, though not all, of the tech industry's elite would rather stay away from directly tackling poverty, or access to education and health care in their work, because these are messy, complex problems that cannot be fundamentally served by techno-utopian solutionism**. More pointedly, any kind of effective, lasting solution to these issues involves collaborating with government agencies and civil society — human bureaucracies often seen by the tech community as anathema to Silicon Valley’s religion for efficiency, agility, and risk-taking. (Consider this 2016 interview with then-president Obama at the tech conference South by Southwest Interactive, in which the interviewer questions how tech and government could plausibly reconcile with one another: “Government is big and bloated and slow and risk-averse, and it's run on outmoded systems and outmoded equipment. Tech is sleek and streamlined, and fail-fast and enamored of the new and the shiny. How do you take these two things that seem culturally to be so unlike and put them together in a way where they can and want to work together**?”) Projects like manned space travel or the hyperloop seem more attractive to Bezos and his tribe, in contrast, not only because they tap into the sense of expansive, imaginative possibility that drew preadolescent versions of these tech entrepreneurs to science in the first place, but also because they can be boiled down, for the most part, to a case of mind over matter — or more accurately, of engineering over physics.** These are problems for which boundary conditions can be modeled, variables manipulated, and equations triumphantly optimized when you throw enough money and people at them. Is there a place for the great-grandchildren’s great-grandchildren of the poor and ordinary in this future universe? There are counterexamples, of course, to this line of thinking. Bill Gates has famously pledged to give the majority of his wealth to philanthropy, and the Gates Foundation focuses on a range of projects, from malaria eradication to efforts to improve nutrition for women and children. Omidyar Network, founded by former eBay cofounder Pierre Omidyar, invests in a portfolio of startups and civil society organizations, whose work spans innovating K-12 school models to building tools for citizen participation; Omidyar also provided the funding to launch the investigative reporting site the Intercept. Similarly, Jeff Skoll, eBay’s first employee and president, created the Skoll Foundation to help social entrepreneurs, as well as the media company Participant Media, “dedicated to entertainment that inspires and compels social change.” Bezos, on his part, recently gave $33 million to a scholarship fund for DREAMers, and has not completely discounted the possibility of engaging in large-scale philanthropy, though it seems clear that his financial contributions there will always pale in comparison to his investment in space travel. Viewed another way, the backlash against Bezos rehashes a long-standing debate about taxpayer dollars funding NASA and space exploration when so many problems on this planet — and this country — remain unsolved. (NASA’s budget for 2018 from federal funds, which amounts to $19.5 billion, is a mere 15% of Bezos’s net worth.) Some may also frame the outrage in terms of the public’s growing distrust of Big Tech and the obtuseness of its wealthy executives. But when you get to the heart of it, the anger directed at Jeff Bezos feels like it comes from someplace deep, and foundational. It is part of our sudden awakening to the ludicrousness of one man unilaterally controlling a magnitude of wealth so stratospheric that it would, as the Guardian notes, cover Britain’s budget deficit twice over. It is the old, yet shocking, story of American capitalism and exceptionalism: that a particular, brilliant, 18-year-old, who once told the Miami Herald in 1982 that he wanted to “build space hotels, amusement parks, yachts and colonies for two or three million people orbiting around the Earth” while our home planet is restored to its ecological glory, would go on to acquire all this wealth 36 years later, and along with it the license to spend his days dreaming of space, while many other 18-year-olds across the United States with similar aspirations and no less grit would not. (Remember that there are others lurking in that secret pantheon of billionaires with far less socially inclusive plans to survive the apocalypse in luxury bunkers.) And ultimately, it is the story of our grudging complicity in their incredible wealth: After all, we are the ones funding their ambitions every time we make a purchase online — one toilet paper subscription at a time. ●

## Extra

#### [Jones]

**Jones**: Jones, Craig. “Enclosing the Cosmos: Privatising Outer Space and Voices of Resistance” *Society and Space,* 2021. JP

Although frontiers can be considered a material reality, the ideological undercurrents that drive engagements with these areas inevitably inform the socio-political-material relationships that take shape (Redclift, 2006). This is also true of Outer Space, which has had various ideologies projected upon it (Valentine, 2012) and been imbued with moral and philosophical deliberations (Arendt, 1958), resulting in a domain that is ‘fully laden with cosmic dreaming, theological wonderings, and science fiction fabulations’ (Kearnes and van Dooren, 2017; p.179). Thus, the discourses adopted by NSE actors do not simply operate to enclose the physical domain of Outer Space through their lobbying and influencing of policy and public opinion. They simultaneously seek to curtail and enclose imaginative spaces and the (counter)narratives therein through the process of disimagination. The process of disimagination selectively edits the historical narrative, removing certain voices, modes of resistance, and alternative accounts, distorting the ability to imagine futures outside of the EuroAmerican neoliberal present [6] (Didi-Huberman, 2008: Giroux, 2014). It is through the processes of disimagination that the condition of capitalist realism is enabled – a state of affairs wherein it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism (Fisher, 2009 [7]). Consequently, the futures curated, maintained, and promoted by NSE actors are structured through a white-ethnocentric rendition of history. The resultant imaginaries and narratives implicitly and explicitly draw upon familiar tropes of white settler colonialism, such as enclosure, working land to produce ‘value’, and the displacing of indigenous/non-Western onto-epistemological frameworks, if not the people themselves [8] (Bhabha and Comaroff, 2002: Hesse, 2002: Loomba et al., 2005: Parry, 2002: Wilkes and Hird, 2019: Wood, 2017: Young, 2001). Through imbibing popular discourses of Outer Space futurity with this history, similar arguments to past enclosures are made. Specifically, that ‘production’ and the ability to ‘work’ a resource operates as the basis through which ownership may be exerted [9]; extractive industries not taking anything away but adding something, and issues coming to centre upon not occupancy or fruitful use but relative value (Wood, 2017). ‍