# Aff

### First: Fwk

**I Affirm Resolved: The appropriation of outer-space by private entities is unjust.**

**I value justice, as the resolution is a question of what is just**

**Thus the value criterion is minimizing structural violence**

**Structural violence is based on moral exclusion and inherently objectifies those who aren’t in our scope**

#### Winter and Leighton 01 |Deborah DuNann Winter and Dana C. Leighton. Winter|[Psychologist that specializes in Social Psych, Counseling Psych, Historical and Contemporary Issues, Peace Psychology. Leighton: PhD graduate student in the Psychology Department at the University of Arkansas. Knowledgable in the fields of social psychology, peace psychology, and justice and intergroup responses to transgressions of justice]

While structural violence often leads to direct violence, the reverse is also true, as brutality terrorizes bystanders, who then become unwilling or unable to confront social injustice. Increasingly, civilians pay enormous costs of war, not only through death, but through devastation of neighborhoods and ecosystems. Ruling elites rarely suffer from armed conflict as much as civilian populations do, who endure decades of poverty and disease in war-torn societies. **Recognizing the operation of structural violence forces us to ask questions about how and why we tolerate**it, questions that often have painful answers. The first chapter in this section, “Social Injustice,” by Susan Opotow, argues that **our normal perceptual/cognitive processes lead us to care about people inside our scope of justice, but rarely care about those people outside. Injustice**that would be instantaneously confronted if it occurred to someone we love or know **is barely noticed if it occurs to strangers or those who are invisible or irrelevant to us.** We do not seem to be able to open our minds and our hearts to everyone; **moral exclusion is a product of our normal cognitive processes.**But Opotow argues convincingly that **we can reduce its nefarious effects by becoming aware of our distorted perceptions. Inclusionary thinking can be fostered by relationships, communication, and appreciation of diversity.** One outcome of exclusionary thinking is the belief that victims of violence must in some way deserve their plight. But certainly it is easy to see that young children do not deserve to be victims. The next two chapters in this section address the violence experienced by children. In the first, “The War Close to Home: Children and Violence in the United States,” Kathleen Kostelny and James Garbarino describe the direct and structural violence which children in Chicago and other urban areas of the United States endure, paralleling that experienced by children who live in countries at war. Children who endure these environments often become battle weary, numb, hopeless, and/or morally impaired. But children not only suffer directly from violence, they also suffer from the impaired parenting and communities which poverty inflicts. The authors describe how community and family support mechanisms can mitigate these effects. For example, home visitation and early childhood education programs provide crucial family and community support.

#### Helping the most vulnerable is a prerequisite to other conflicting utilitarian concerns, as the most vulnerable, minorities, are always impacted first and hardest.

## Global warming

#### Global warming difficult to solve for in a world of privatization due to varying factors

**Jocelyn Timperley**, 12-8-20**21**, "Billionaire space race: What does it mean for climate change and the environment?," BBC Science Focus Magazine, <https://www.sciencefocus.com/news/billionaire-space-race-what-does-it-mean-for-climate-change-and-the-environment/>

After landing from his sub-orbital flight to the edge of space, Bezos said the experience had reinforced his commitment to fighting climate change. But **one crucial question** about this fast-moving sector **is what impact it could have on the environment itself? Rockets burn through huge amounts of propellants to take off.** But **there are a variety of ways to launch rockets into space, so understanding the exact impacts of each craft is not always straightforward**. “With all space travel, **including space tourism, the environmental impacts depend on a variety of factors** that are **specific to the mission**,” said Dr Simit Raval, a senior lecturer at the University of New South Wales and co-author of a recent analysis on space launch emissions**. More research is needed to ensure a “robust understanding” of these impacts,** he says. Arguably**, the two most important environmental impacts** of space travel **are** its **contribution to global warming and stratospheric ozone loss**, says Raval.

#### Things like the Space Race are extremely harmful for Earth as a whole

Sam **Hetherington**, 7-14-20**21**, "Billionaire Space Race is Actually Horrible for the Planet," Monster Children, <https://www.monsterchildren.com/billionaire-space-race-is-actually-horrible-for-the-planet/>

**Travelling to space**—like most forms of high-speed transport—**results in a release of carbon emissions into the atmosphere**. Last year there were 114 attempted orbital launches, which is significantly lower than the total emissions created from everyday commuters worldwide. However**, the big**ger **problem with space exploration is the trace gases and soot that are released by the rocket engines as they enter the upper atmosphere of the Earth. A report** into the environmental impact of space launches **found that holes in the ozone layers are the most concerning for our atmosphere and planet. Every time a rocket goes into space, it makes another hole**. It’s like putting a hole in cling wrap and trying to reuse that same piece of cling wrap again for your sandwiches—it just doesn’t work. Except the cling wrap is our atmosphere, and we can’t get another piece. **The modern-day space race between Amazon’s Jeff Bezos and Virgin’s Richard Branson doesn’t represent pushing the boundaries of human achievement**. It **represents stupidly rich people profiting once again from exploiting the Earth. Virgin Galactic took clear advantage following the flight when they announced they would be selling $500 million worth of stock** after their share prices jumped nearly 100 percent. Plans (alongside Elon Musk’s Space X) to make space tourism like booking a flight to Bali, only slightly more expensive, is time and money that could be spent reversing issues like world hunger and environmental catastrophe. Instead, we have Branson capitalizing on a mission to space for the sake of entertainment and saying shit like, ‘If we can do this, imagine what else we can do.’ I don’t want to imagine, because it’s not the stuff of dreams.

#### Environmental racism is the concept of injustice of marginalized communities in relation to fossil fuels and fossil fuel production as it pertains to pollution. The only way to fix this is through affirmation of the resolution.

GreenAction No Date (GreenAction, no date, organization that publicly advocates for environmental justice, “Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism,” <http://greenaction.org/what-is-environmental-justice/>)

Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color. Environmental justice is the movement’s response to environmental racism. “Environmental equity” is not environmental justice. “Environmental equity” is the government’s response to the demands of the environmental justice movement. Government agencies, like the EPA, have been trying to coopt the movement by redefining environmental justice as “fair treatment and meaningful involvement,” something they consistently fail to accomplish, but which also falls far short of the environmental justice vision. The environmental justice movement isn’t seeking to simply redistribute environmental harms, but to abolish them. Environmental racism refers to the institutional rules, regulations, policies or government and/or corporate decisions that deliberately target certain communities for locally undesirable land uses and lax enforcement of zoning and environmental laws, resulting in communities being disproportionately exposed to toxic and hazardous waste based upon race. Environmental racism is caused by several factors, including intentional neglect, the alleged need for a receptacle for pollutants in urban areas, and a lack of institutional power and low land values of people of color. It is a well-documented fact that communities of color and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by polluting industries (and very specifically, hazardous waste facilities) and lax regulation of these industries.

#### Communities of color are negatively impacted by the locations of fossil fuel facilities

**Banerjee et al 18** (Debolina Banerjee, Katrina Peterson, Howard Greenwich, 2018, researchers for Puget Sound Sage, “I-1631 Takes Aim at the True Cost of Fossil Fuel Use for Communities of Color,” <https://www.pugetsoundsage.org/true-cost-of-fossil-fuel-use-for-communities-of-color/>)

In the US, scientists have proved that major fossil fuel companies like ExxonMobil, BP, Royal Dutch Shell, ConocoPhillips, Peabody Energy, CONSOL Energy, and Arch Coal are substantial contributors to the total historical emissions driving disruptive climate change.19 They are also responsible for undermining the health of people of color extensively in the U.S. For example, in Washington, people of color and low-income people are disproportionately exposed to fossil fuel pollution.20 Similarly, in California, major greenhouse gas and particulate matter emitting facilities are located in communities of color. 21 This disproportionate exposure to air pollution exacerbates the pre-existing health conditions and poverty in these neighborhoods. In Seattle, Georgetown and South Park neighborhoods have historically born this burden. These neighborhoods have some of the worst measures of air pollution, exposure to contaminated sites, and lack of access to healthy built environment. Residents have an average life expectancy of 8 years lower than the Seattle average.22 Air pollution, one of the major outcomes of fossil fuel use (especially transportation emissions23) and industrial energy use, is a major contributor to asthma and respiratory disease. But the burden of asthma and other respiratory diseases are disproportionately high for people of color, especially for people with preexisting respiratory diseases. According to 2014 and 2015 data24 from the US Department of Health and Human Services, African American women were 20% more likely to have asthma than whites. In 2015, African American children were “10 times more likely” to die from asthma related causes than the white population; African American adults were almost “3 times more likely” to die. In Washington state, medical researchers estimate that at least 1/3rd of all Washingtonians have a medical condition exacerbated by vehicular air pollution. In 2009, Washington State Department of Ecology estimated that each year around 5,700 WA residents suffer premature deaths, non-fatal heart attacks, acute bronchitis and asthma due to fossil fuel air pollution.25 In 2010, data revealed that Washington state hospitals charged $73 million for asthma-related hospitalizations. $4.8 of this $73 million was charged to patients themselves. In the same year, work-related asthma cost Washington state approximately $300,000.26 But, severe health inequity based on race and class exists here as well.27 In Washington State, whites have longer life expectancies than all other races: Hispanic adults have a shorter life-expectancy than whites by 12 years, Blacks by 10 years, and Asian/Pacific Islanders by 3 years.28 American Indian/Alaskan Natives and African Americans have a significantly higher prevalence of asthma as well as death rates (about 75 per year) from asthma than non-Hispanic whites, especially for urban areas.29 In 2010, Washington State lost 4.3 million person-days of productivity as 22% of working adults missed work due to asthma. For a working member in a low-income family, missing work could mean losing earnings, especially if the person gets paid on a daily or hourly basis. This is extremely hard for such families.30 31 32 The American Lung Association data for 2017 found Washington State counties to score very poorly on health outcomes due to pollution from fossil fuels, with Yakima, Snohomish, Pierce, and Clark counties scoring the poorest grades.33

#### This particularly impacts African American communities as they statistically obtain high rates of poverty and lower rates of health insurance

**Fleischman and Franklin 17** (Lesley Fleischman, Marcus Franklin, 2017, authors of the NAACP brief on environmental racism and the negative impacts of environmental racism in African American communities, November 2017, “Fumes Across the Fence-Line,” <http://www.naacp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Fumes-Across-the-Fence-Line_NAACP_CATF.pdf>)

Many African Americans are particularly burdened with the health impacts from air pollution, due to high levels of poverty and relatively lower rates of health insurance. Individuals living below the poverty level are particularly burdened by the effects of air pollution. In 2015, 24 percent of the African American population (including 32 percent of African American children) were living in poverty, compared to 14 percent for the overall US population (and 20 percent of US children).17 High poverty rates restrict housing options for African American families. African Americans are also somewhat less likely to have health insurance than the population as a whole. In 2015, 11.5 percent was the uninsured rate for African Americans under the age of 65, versus 10.8 percent for the population as a whole and 7.5 percent for the white population.18 The combination of higher poverty rates and lower prevalence of health insurance exacerbates the impact air pollution has on low-income African American families.

#### Lack of health insurance leads to less preventative screenings, thus decreasing the amount of opportunities lower income and minority groups affected by fossil fuels have to improve their health

**National Academy of Sciences 02** (National Academy of Sciences, 2002, governmental non-profit organization, “Effects of Health Insurance on Health,” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220636/>)

These findings have important implications for health outcomes, as can be seen in the later sections on cancer and chronic diseases. For prevention and screening services, health insurance facilitates both the receipt of services and a continuing care relationship or regular source of care, which also increases the likelihood of receiving appropriate care. Insurance benefits are less likely to include preventive and screening services ([Box 3.2](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220636/box/bbb00012/?report=objectonly)) than they are physician visits for acute care or diagnostic tests for symptomatic conditions. However, over time, coverage of preventive and screening services has been increasing. In 1998, about three-quarters of adults with employment-based health insurance had a benefit package that included adult physical examinations; two years later in 2000, the proportion had risen to 90 percent (KPMG, 1998; Kaiser Family Foundation/HRET, 2000). Yet even if health insurance benefit packages do not cover preventive or screening services, those with health insurance are more likely to receive these recommended services because they are more likely to have a regular source of care, and having a regular source of care is independently associated with receiving recommended services (Bush and Langer, 1998; Gordon et al., 1998; Mandelblatt et al., 1999; Zambrana et al., 1999; Cummings et al., 2000; Hsia et al., 2000; Breen et al., 2001). The effect of having health insurance is more evident for relatively costly services, such as mammograms, than for less costly services, such as a clinical breast exam (CBE) or Pap test (Zambrana et al., 1999; Cummings et al., 2000; O'Malley et al., 2001). According to several large population surveys conducted within the past decade, adults without health insurance are less likely to receive recommended preventive and screening services and are less likely to receive them at the frequencies recommended by the United States Preventive Services Task Force than are insured adults.[2](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220636/) The 1992 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) documented receipt of mammography, CBE, Pap test, fecal occult blood test (FOBT), sigmoidoscopy, and digital rectal exam by adults under 65 (Potosky et al., 1998). Those with no health insurance had significantly lower screening rates compared to those with private coverage *and* compared to those with Medicaid for every service except sigmoidoscopy. The odds ratios (ORs) for receiving a screening service if uninsured compared with having private health insurance ranged from 0.27 for mammography to 0.43 for Pap test.[3](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220636/) The 1998 NHIS found that, although rates of screening at appropriate intervals had increased generally over the preceding decade, they remained substantially lower for uninsured adults than for those with any kind of health insurance (Breen et al., 2001).[4](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220636/) In a multivariable analysis that adjusted for age, race, education, and a regular source of care, uninsured adults were significantly less likely than those with any kind of coverage to receive a Pap test, mammography, and colorectal screening (FOBT or sigmoidoscopy) (ORs ranged from 0.37 to 0.5) (Breen et al., 2001). The study reported a strong relationship between having a regular source of care and timely receipt of these screening services in addition to the relationship between health insurance and screening.

### Contention 2: Captialism is unsustainable

#### Affirm as a means of engaging in afrofuturist narratives and reject ideas of US domination

**McKinson 21** McKinson, Kimberley. Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine, assistant professor of anthropology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The City University of New York (CUNY), research is situated at the intersections of urban security/insecurity, material culture, Caribbean postcoloniality, and critical Black historiography, Published Palimpsestic Securityscapes: Making Home and Excavating Memory in Postcolonial Jamaica.. "Do Black Lives Matter In Outer Space?". *SAPIENS*, 2021, <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/space-colonization-racism/>. <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/space-colonization-racism/>

On May 30, I tuned in to see the launch of the SpaceX Crew Dragon from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The Dragon, the first spacecraft to launch from U.S. soil in nearly a decade, was to herald the dawn of a new age of space colonization. As I watched the astronauts on TV clad in futuristic [designer-made suits](https://design-milk.com/the-design-of-the-spacex-spacesuit-explained/#:~:text=Credit%20for%20America's%20SpaceX%20spacesuit,for%20an%20actual%20space%20program) prepare for blastoff, my mind was flooded with memories of my childhood in Jamaica. As a young girl in the 1990s, I spent hours poring over my Childcraft encyclopedias. I particularly loved the thick, brightly colored volume titled *Our Universe*, where I could bury my head in the stars and nurture my obsession with planets and black holes. Moments after the SpaceX launch, the broadcasted [words of President Donald Trump](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-kennedy-space-center/) jolted me out of my reverie. He was giving a speech to the crowd gathered for the launch. “The United States has regained our place of prestige as the world leader,” he announced. The president’s usual bluster-filled language about American greatness rang particularly hollow that day at Cape Canaveral. At that exact moment, [hundreds of thousands of Americans](https://www.nytimes.com/article/george-floyd-protests-timeline.html) were protesting in response to the horrific killing of George Floyd, an African American man who was in police custody, only five days prior. Floyd’s death had embodied, in 8 minutes and 46 seconds, the ugliest of America’s fractures. Even as a girl, it had never been possible for me to escape for too long into dreams of being an astronaut. I was always acutely aware, in my own child-like way, of my precariousness here on Earth. While growing up, I faced a lost family business, a lost family home, and a lost father who was desperately seeking work in the United States. My intimate losses were statistical casualties in Jamaica, a country struggling with economic insecurity, crime, migration, and the terms of what it meant to truly be “*post*colonial” on an increasingly globalized planet. The wonders of the universe, I learned, could not shield me from the fractures in the world around me. And so, on that perfectly clear May afternoon, I was struck by this juxtaposition of images that felt strangely familiar: At Cape Canaveral, Americans were being ushered to look to the stars to imagine the utopic future of humankind in space, while in the streets, they were confronting the country’s dystopic underbelly of anti-Black racism. I have yet to realize my childhood dream of traveling to space. However, I did discover the anthropological galaxy after leaving Jamaica for the U.S. as a teenager to seek a new intellectual frontier. Today, as a Black anthropologist living and working in New York City, my position in the world has changed. But my scholarly work still ties me to Jamaica, where I came of age. My research focuses on how concerns about crime and security in Kingston, Jamaica, have come to organize social life in this Caribbean capital city. From this personal and intellectual vantage point, the two historic events of May 30—the euphoric SpaceX mission and the outrage-filled protests against anti-Black racism—do not appear at odds. Rather, they are undeniably tethered. How should Americans understand SpaceX’s goal of space colonization in a world now indelibly changed by the killing of Floyd? And will the future era of space colonization be one that is just and whole for all? Founded by the billionaire technology entrepreneur Elon Musk in 2002, SpaceX is at the forefront of efforts to colonize space. Musk insists that one way to ensure the survival of human civilization is to make humans a multi-planet species. To make this goal a reality, Musk is committed to establishing a human colony on Mars, which will necessitate altering the red planet’s environment so it can support terrestrial life. The fear that drives these efforts is that a natural or human-made planetary-scale crisis—such as climate change or resource depletion—will render Earth inhospitable for human beings. Put simply, SpaceX’s vision is one predicated on addressing future insecurity on Earth by creating and curating security for humans on Mars. Space exploration is not and has never been politically neutral. 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](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/06/elon-musk-juneteenth-spacex-tesla/613330/). 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](https://history.nasa.gov/SP-4104/appb.htm). 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](https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822396765).” 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 {CUT} in the name of exploration, adventure, and expansion by White people. Today the scions of space colonization are the billionaire entrepreneurs [who have founded](https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45919650) 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. For African Americans, race and racism have always been specters that hover over American space exploration. The late poet, musician, and author Gil Scott-Heron captured this sentiment well in his [1970 spoken word poem](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goh2x_G0ct4) “Whitey on the Moon,” which was a critique of NASA’s Apollo program. Released on his debut album *Small Talk at 125th and Lenox* a year after U.S. astronauts landed on the moon, the poem begins: *A rat done bit my sister Nell. (with Whitey on the moon) Her face and arms began to swell. (and Whitey’s on the moon) I can’t pay no doctor bills. (but Whitey’s on the moon) Ten years from now I’ll be paying still. (while Whitey’s on the moon)* As the poem conveys, for many African Americans, the Apollo program did not conjure fantastical images of human technological advancement. The first moon landing could not obscure the painful realities of social suffering that for centuries had gnawed viciously on the African American body and psyche, and resulted in the fever-like conditions of the 1960s civil rights era. By dislodging U.S. space exploration from the realm of fantasy, Scott-Heron reminds his audience that, to the contrary, the social priorities that fueled the Apollo program and American space conquest—as envisaged by “Whitey”—were deeply implicated in Black socioeconomic dispossession and racial inequality. Moments after the SpaceX astronauts left the Earth behind, [Trump’s words rang out](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-kennedy-space-center/): “Space travel is not a feat of engineering alone. It’s also a moral endeavor—a measure of a nation’s vision, its willpower, its place in the world.” In a post-Floyd world, the U.S. will undoubtedly have to forcefully confront the ways in which she has failed to measure up to her highest moral ideals. And yet this moment also presents the opportunity to reevaluate our collective principles to articulate once again our vision for the future, both here on Earth and in outer space. Will this be a future equitable for all? Will it be one predicated not on Black alienation but on Black reclamation, one invested not in the fragmentation of Black people and their histories but in the project of making them whole? Will those in the U.S. be bold enough to envision such an Afro-future? It is such a future—brilliantly depicted and embraced by numerous generations of African American literary, musical, and visual artists—that fills me with a child-like sense of wonder, much like how I felt when I first discovered *Our Universe*. It is in this future, that I, a Black woman, would like to make my home.

#### The main goal of those privatizing space is not to help society or the Earth

**Paris marx**, 6-8-20**20**, "Yes to Space Exploration. No to Space Capitalism.," No Publication, <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism>

**Musk and Bezos** are the **lead**ing drivers of **the modern push to privatize and colonize space through** their respective companies, **SpaceX and Blue Origin**. Their visions differ slightly, with Musk preferring to colonize Mars, while Bezos has more interest in building space colonies in orbit. In 2016, Musk claimed he would begin sending rockets to Mars in 2018. That never happened, but it hasn’t ended his obsession. Musk is determined to make humans a multi-planetary species, framing our choice as either space colonization or the risk of extinction. Bezos says that Earth is the best planet in our solar system, but if we don’t colonize space we doom ourselves to “stasis and rationing.” These framings serve the interests of these billionaires, and make it seem like colonizing space is an obvious and necessary choice when it isn’t. It ignores their personal culpability and the role of the capitalist system they seek to reproduce in causing the problems they say we need to flee in the first place. Billionaires have a much greater carbon footprint than ordinary people, with Musk flying his private jet all around the world as he claims to be an environmental champion. Amazon, meanwhile, is courting oil and gas companies with cloud services to make their business more efficient, and Tesla is selling a false vision of sustainability that purposely serves people like Musk, all while capitalism continues to drive the climate system toward the cliff edge. Colonizing space will not save us from billionaire-fueled climate dystopia. But these billionaires do not hide who would be served by their futures. Musk has given many figures for the cost of a ticket to Mars, but they’re never cheap. He told Vance the tickets would cost $500,000 to $1 million, a price at which he thinks “it’s highly likely that there will be a self-sustaining Martian colony.” However, the workers for such a colony clearly won’t be able to buy their own way. Rather, Musk tweeted a plan for Martian indentured servitude where workers would take on loans to pay for their tickets and pay them off later because “There will be a lot of jobs on Mars!” Bezos is even more open about how the workforce will have to expand to serve his vision, but has little to say about what they’ll be doing. His plan to maintain economic “growth and dynamism” requires the human population to grow to a trillion people. He claims this would create “a thousand Mozarts and a thousand Einsteins” who would live in space colonies that are supposed to house a million people each, with the surface of Earth being mainly for tourism. Meanwhile, industrial and mining work would move into orbit so as not to pollute the planet, and while he doesn’t explicitly acknowledge it, it’s likely that’s where you’ll find many of those trillion workers toiling for their space overlord and his descendants.

#### Space capitalism is just another way for billionaires to serve themselves

**Paris marx**, 6-8-20**20**, "Yes to Space Exploration. No to Space Capitalism.," No Publication, <https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism>

In 1978, Murray Bookchin skewered a certain brand of futurism that sought to “extend the present into the future” and desired “multinational corporations to become multi-cosmic corporations.” Much of this future thinking obsesses about possible changes to technology, but seeks to preserve the existing social and economic relations — “the present as it exists today, projected, one hundred years from now,” as Bookchin put it. That’s at the core of the space billionaires’ vision for the future. Space has been used by past US presidents to bolster American power and influence, but it was largely accepted that capitalism ended at the edge of the atmosphere. That’s no longer the case, and just as past capitalist expansions have come at the expense of poor and working people to enrich a small elite, so too will this one. **Bezos** and Trump may have a public feud, but that doesn’t mean that their mutual **interest is**n’t **served by a renewed US push into space that funnels massive public funds into private pockets and seeks to open celestial bodies to capitalist resource extraction**. This is not to say that we need to halt space exploration. The collective interest of humanity is served by learning more about the solar system and the universe beyond, but the goal of such missions must be driven by gaining scientific knowledge and enhancing global cooperation, not nationalism and profit-making. Yet that’s exactly what the space billionaires and American authoritarians have found common cause in, with Trump declaring that “a new age of American ambition has now begun” at a NASA press briefing just hours before cities across the country were placed under curfew last week. Before space can be explored in a way that benefits all of humankind, existing social relations must be transformed, not extended into the stars as part of a new colonial project.

#### Whitey is on the moon. There’s a glaring issue with diversity in private sector programs. Plans for space appropriation by said entities Blue Origin is only one example.

**Bogle 21** (Colin Bogle is an American-born first-generation Jamaican now based in Denver. He has experience working at the intersection of climate change and social justice issues throughout the Caribbean/Latin America region. Colin is also interested in how existing social fractures stand to be exacerbated by climate change. His specialties include community organizing, socioeconomic inequality, and sustainable development. He is now studying for a master's in International Studies with a focus on Global Environmental Change and Adaptation.) Bogle, Colin. "How “Whitey on the Moon” Perfectly Captures Bezos’ Space Joy Ride." 12 August 2021. *yesmagazine.com.* 7 January 2022. <https://www.yesmagazine.org/opinion/2021/08/12/amazon-jeff-bezos-space-program>.

After Jeff Bezos returned from his 10-minute space flight in late July, there was a moment during his post-flight news conference when the crowd seemed to realize just how fucked up it all was. Bezos singled out Amazon’s customers and staff, saying “you guys paid for all this.” Realizing the gravitas of that casual statement, the audience emitted some pained laughter while the hostess looked around awkwardly, waiting for the moment to subside. It reminded me of what Gil Scott-Heron, the “godfather of rap” said in his 1970 poem “Whitey on the Moon.”Those watching Bezos might have realized just what it meant when the world’s richest man said that the public paid for the lavish goods he enjoys, especially seeing as he doesn’t seem to contribute much to the goods that the public enjoys. Maybe at a time when a raging pandemic has widened existing wealth inequality, people don’t want to hear how much they contributed to the wealth of a man whose net worth jumped by 74% over the past 13 months, while roughly 9.6 million Americans lost their jobs in the first three quarters of 2020.There is no denying the connections between wealth inequality, climate change, and racial inequality, and there’s no denying Amazon’s complicity in all three.It could also be that at a time when the impacts of climate change are beginning to be felt, people don’t want to hear much from a man who has rained down untold amounts of pollutants onto the Earth via his space joyride, and whose company has released as many greenhouse gases as a moderately sized country. Amazon in and of itself encourages climate change through its championing of overconsumption, pollution, and waste—all while stifling small businesses, raising housing prices, opposing unions and driving up wealth inequality.Bezos seems to have realized that public opinion is souring. Not only has he announced a $10 billion contribution to fighting climate change, but he also took the time after his space flight to announce twin donations of $100 million—pocket change for him—to various causes tied to an initiative he is calling the “courage and civility awards,” a thinly veiled attempt at public relations. The reality is that Jeff Bezos and Amazon are so entangled in a system of perpetuating inequality that no individual contribution can unwind the systemic oppression that makes such gross displays of wealth inequality possible.I am not slighting Bezos for his contributions, but I was all too aware of the inequality he perpetuates for me to see his space flight and donations and react with anything other than disgust. Bezos’ ugly display embodied Scott-Heron’s words, “Was all that money I made las’ year(for Whitey on the moon?) How come there ain’t no money here?(Hm! Whitey’s on the moon).The poem was a scathing critique of the 1969 moon landing and earlier space race, an act of geopolitical showboating between the U.S. and USSR whose resources Scott-Heron felt would have been better invested in fighting poverty.I believe that Scott-Heron used the word “Whitey” without racist intent. He was reflecting on the overlapping of racial identity and privilege in the U.S. In his eyes, the crowning achievement of the U.S. at that time solely benefited the White majority who stood to gain from the increasing prestige and privilege of landing a man on the moon. Scott-Heron, his sister, and the rest of Black America were not considered to have shared in any noticeable achievement as they continued to languish in racialized poverty.Scott-Heron’s observations remain timely today, as do his solutions. As he urged his (presumably White) landlord to contact his fellow “Whiteys” to pay rent on his behalf, so too do I urge the (mostly White) American political system to make Jeff Bezos pay his fair share in taxes into the public treasury. The myth of the self-made billionaire is eroded by the billions of dollars Bezos’ company receives in taxpayer subsidy, which only serve to undermine economic stability and should be revoked.We cannot rely on Bezos’ self-serving charitable whims to fight climate change and racial inequality, nor can we allow him to amass so much wealth without taxation that he can squander it on more lavish displays of excess.Systemic racism and its myriad manifestations are a difficult beast to wrangle, and the idea of significantly tackling such an issue with charitable donations from billionaires like Bezos is folly. Amazon’s commitment to racial equality is hot air, especially given its history of worker abuse, racism at the corporate level, and overall racist modus operandi, all of which contribute to a perception by former employees that the company is hardly committed to tackling its own problems, let alone those of the wider society.Amazon’s undermining of unionization efforts at its majority Black fulfilment center in Bessemer, Alabama, is a perfect example of systemic racism. Its internal memos on the threats that racial diversity poses to its model undermine any racial justice claims made by Bezos. If he really wanted to make a difference, he could start by treating his employees like human beings, reworking its employment system, and respecting third-party sellers.Ultimately the work of decentering our economic system’s focus on constant growth can never truly be accomplished by a company that relishes its ever-growing monopoly.

#### Thus the only way to solve this discrimination is to affirm.