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#### The capitalist drive to accumulate leads to crises of overaccumulation, which are then resolved through imperialism

Harvey 3: Harvey, David. "Capital Bondage." Distinguished Professor of Anthropology & Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), and the Director of Research, Center for Place, Culture and Politics. The New Imperialism. Oxford University Press, 2003. 87-89

The survival of capitalism for so long in the face of multiple crises and reorganizations accompanied by dire predictions, from both the left and the right, of its imminent demise, is a mystery that requires illumination. Lefebvre, for one, thought he had found the key in his celebrated comment that capitalism survives through the production of space, but he unfortunately failed to explain exactly how or why this might be the case.1 Certainly both Lenin and Luxemburg, though for quite different reasons and utilizing quite different forms of argument, considered that imperialism—a certain form of production and utilization of the global space—was the answer to the riddle, though in both cases this solution was finite and therefore replete with its own terminal contradictions. It was in this context that, in a series of publications beginning more than twenty years ago, I proposed a theory of a 'spatial fix' (more accurately a spatio-temporal fix) to the crisis-prone inner contradictions of capital accumulation.2 The central point of this argument concerned a chronic tendency within capitalism, theoretically derived out of a reformulation of Marx's theory of the tendency for the profit rate to fall, to produce crises of overaccumulation.3 Such crises are typically registered as surpluses of capital (in commodity, money, or productive capacity forms) and surpluses of labour power side by side, without there apparently being any means to bring them together profitably to accomplish socially useful tasks. The most obvious case of this was the world-wide slump of the 1930s when capacity utilization was at an alltime low, surplus commodities could not be sold, and unemployment was at an all-time high. The effect was to devalue and in some cases even destroy the surpluses of capital and to reduce the surpluses of labour power to a miserable state. Since it is the lack of profitable opportunities that lies at the heart of the difficulty, the key economic (as opposed to social and political) problem lies with capital. If devaluation is to be avoided, then profitable ways must be found to absorb the capital surpluses. Geographical expansion and spatial reorganization provide one such option. But this option cannot be divorced from temporal shifts in which surplus capital gets displaced into long-term projects that take many years to return their value to circulation through the productive activity they support. Since geographical expansion often entails investment in long-lived physical and social infrastructures (in transport and communications networks and education and research for example), the production and reconfiguration of space relations provides one potent way to stave off, if not resolve, the tendency towards crisis formation under capitalism. The US government tried to respond to the overaccumulation problem in the 1930s, for example, by setting up futureoriented public works projects in hitherto undeveloped 88 Capital Bondage locations with the direct intention of mopping up the surpluses of capital and labour then available (it was in the same spirit, incidentally, that the Nazis built the autobahns during these years). The capitalistic (as opposed to territorial) logic of imperialism has, I argue, to be understood against this background of seeking out 'spatio-temporal fixes' to the capital surplus problem (and it is, I repeat, the capital surplus rather than the labour surplus that must be the primary focus of analytic attention). In order to understand how this happens, I must first describe, albeit in schematic and very general terms, how capital circulates in space and time to create its own distinctive historical geography. In so doing, I will try to keep the dialectical relationship between the politics of state and empire on the one hand and the molecular movements of capital accumulation in space and time on the other, firmly at the centre of the argument. I therefore begin with some basic observations on the importance of the state as a territorialized framework within which the molecular processes of capital accumulation operate.

#### Capitalistic imperialism relies on the existence of an ‘outside,’ but in the modern day, there is no more outside – at least, not on Earth

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Can capitalism go on expanding forever? It is a question many people have asked for many years. It is also a relevant question when considering the prospect of capitalism’s potentially infinite expansion into the cosmos. In the early decades of the 20th century, Rosa Luxemburg suggested that capitalism always needs an ‘outside’, a zone of non-capitalism in which people would buy goods made in capitalist societies (Luxemburg, 2004). To continue expanding, capitalism needs to continue placing a large part of its surplus into the means of production, machines and technology. Imperialism, according to Luxemburg, is the competitive struggle between capitalist nations for what remains of the non-capitalist ‘outside’. And yet, Luxemburg also argued, there is a fundamental contradiction, one ultimately leading to capitalism’s collapse. As it increasingly draws its ‘outside’ into itself, capitalism also destroys the very demand it needs for its products. The surplus value produced by capitalism simply cannot be absorbed. This is not the place to assess in detail Luxemburg’s arguments or the debates she has generated. Suffice to note that many Marxists now argue that, while crises of underconsumption are important, crises stemming from overaccumulation of capital and the need for ‘outside’ regions in which to invest are even more significant as regards the further expansion of capitalism (Brewer, 1990; Harvey, 2003). Luxemburg was nevertheless the first attempt explicitly to raise the question of how capitalism relates to a non-capitalist ‘outside’ and whether capitalism can, in principle, last forever as it colonizes its outside. The question of capitalism’s ‘outside’ is now being asked again, albeit in a rather different form. Hardt and Negri, in their influential text Empire, tell us that ‘there is no more outside.’ They state that ‘in the passage from modern to postmodern, from Imperialism to Empire, there is progressively less distinction between inside and outside’ (2000: 187). They make this case in relation to the economy, politics and militarism in today’s form of globalization. As regards economics, Hardt and Negri admit that the capitalist market has always run counter to any division between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’. It has been constantly expanded globally and yet has encountered barriers. But at the same time it has also thrived on overcoming such barriers, reorganizing itself to overcome these limits. But now the global market is so dominant that it is even more difficult to envisage a distinction between an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’ market waiting to be subjugated, made part of the capitalist market and in due course reorganized as a site of capitalist production. There is no ‘outside’ left and capital is reduced to re-engaging in a form of ‘primitive accumulation’; privatizing publicly-owned assets, making them into commodities to be bought and sold. As regards politics, Hardt and Negri argue that sovereignty has in the past invariably been conceived in terms of territory and its relation to an ‘outside’. The Enlightenment ideal is one in which civil order and sovereignty are established within an inside region, while ‘social disorder’ and ‘nature’ are an outside still to be controlled and exploited. Such, according to Hardt and Negri, is the old model of empire, one in which there was a radical distinction between an imperializing inside and a dominated outside. But the old model has now gone, there being no ‘outside’ left in our globalized society and with opposition in its many forms as likely to be within the nation states it is opposing. In military terms too there is no longer, according to Hardt and Negri, any distinction to be made between inside and outside. The ‘enemy’ is as likely to be ‘within’ a nation state as located in an outside, hostile, region or an outside state. ‘The history of imperialist, inter-imperialist and anti-imperialist wars’, Hardt and Negri assert, ‘is over.’ (2000: 189). This makes every war into an internal, domestic or civil strife. ‘In the smooth space of Empire, there is no place of power – it is both everywhere and nowhere.’ (2000: 190). At the same time, and as part of this incorporation of warfare into nation states, militarization has been made permanently integral to the whole of economic, social and political life. Hardt and Negri go on to argue that resistance to capitalism is everywhere and nowhere. A ‘multitude’ is emerging within the new ‘smooth space of Empire’, one capable of overturning the social system of which it is part (Hardt and Negri, 2006).

#### Thus, I affirm Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust. I’ll specify in cross. Private appropriation of outer space is nothing more than an attempt to create a new frontier, a new “outside,” thereby providing yet another temporary fix for the contradictions and crises of capitalism

Dickens TWO: Dickens, P. (2009). An economic geographer whose research focuses on processes and patterns in globalisation. The Cosmos as Capitalism’s Outside. The Sociological Review, 57(1\_suppl), 66–82. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954x.2009.01817.x

Explanatory primacy is given here to economic mechanisms driving this humanization of the universe. In the same way that they have driven imperializing societies in the past to expand their economic bases into their ‘outsides’, the social relations of capitalism and the processes of capital-accumulation are driving the new kind of outer space imperialisms. Such is the starting-point of this paper (See also Dickens and Ormrod, 2007). It is a position based on the work of the contemporary Marxist geographer David Harvey (2003) and his notion of ‘spatial fixes’. Capitalism continually constructs what he calls ‘outer transformations.’ In the context of the over-accumulation of capital in the primary circuit of industrial capital, fresh geographic zones are constantly sought out which have not yet been fully invested in or, in the case of outer space, not yet been invested in at all. ‘Outer spatial fixes’ are investments in outer space intended to solve capitalism’s many crises. At one level they may be simply described as crises of economic profitability. But ‘economic’ can cover a wide array of issues such as crises of resource-availability and potential social and political upheavals resulting from resource-shortages. Furthermore, there is certainly no guarantee that 69 these investments will actually ‘fix’ these underlying economic, political and social crises. The ‘fix’ may well be of a temporary, sticking-plaster, variety. At the centre of the imperialising process (cosmic and earthly) is ‘the primary circuit of capital’ in which value is made through the exploitation of labourpower. (See Figure 1.) Money buys labour-power and the means of production; raw materials and technology. A labour-process is then set in train and commodities are produced. These commodities are sold on the market, with some of the money-proceeds taking the form of wages paid to workers and some being recycled back to the investors of capital investing in new circuits. This primary circuit is no less than the underlying essence of capitalism. This recycling takes place (usually via banks and other financial institutions) into what Harvey calls ‘the secondary circuit’, that in which ‘fixed capital’ is created as inputs to new rounds of production (Figure 2). In this way the productivity of labour is increased. Alternatively the secondary circuit takes the form of consumers’ savings being circulated, again via banks and the capital market, into the creation of consumer durables, houses and the like. This circuit is important to Harvey as a geographer since it underlies urban and regional development, including the process of suburbanisation in previously sparselypopulated regions. And it is important for this study since we are specifically interested in the spatial implications of capital’s ‘fixes’. Finally, Harvey identifies a ‘tertiary circuit’ in which states are mediators in the flow of capital into new investments (Figure 3). Surpluses are extracted (mainly by the device of government taxation) from the surpluses made in the primary circuit and reinvested in technology, science and administration. Similarly, they are extracted for other ‘state functions’ such as social expenditure; military expenditures, police, education and the like. Again, these flows generate new primary circuits of capital. Figure 4 shows the three types of circuit of capital combined. The diagram looks rather mechanistic but circuits of capital are unstable and crisis-ridden. Indeed, crises often underlie the switching practices outlined above. One form of crisis develops when all those consumers inclined and able to consume a particular product at a particular price will have actually done so. A crisis of over-production ensues and rates of profit fall. There are a number of possible ‘fixes’ for this crisis, one of the most relevant to outer-space imperialism being the search for cheaper (usually meaning more plentiful) supplies of raw materials. Cheaper inputs should mean that commodities start reaching more consumers and, if this happens, new rounds of accumulation are underway. Attempting to restore profitability through access to new raw materials therefore means that capitalism’s fixes often involve geographical expansion. Capital, in Neil Smith’s words ‘stalks the Earth in search of material resources’ (1984: 46). He goes on to say that ‘no part of the Earth’s surface, the atmosphere, the oceans, the geological substratum or the biological superstratum are immune from transformation by capital’ (op. cit. p. 56). The galaxy can now be added to this list of resources being ‘stalked’ by capital.

#### The improbable scenario of saving humanity through space is a way for capitalism to divert attention away from the fact that its model of limitless exploitation is a failure.

Julien Tort, UNESCO, July 28 2005, Working paper for the Ethical Working Group on Astrobiology and Planetary Protection of ESA (EWG) “Exploration and Exploitation: Lessons Learnt from the Renaissance for Space Conquest” http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL\_ID=6195&URL\_DO=DO\_TOPIC&URL\_SECTION=-465.html

The scenario in which extraterrestrial room is used as a response to the degradation of the terrestrial environment also leads us to the second question that may be asked when considering the parallel between the conquest of the West and the exploration of space. While the possibility of colonizing celestial bodies may seem distant, it diverts attention from terrestrial issues in a very real way. The paradigm of the accumulation of Capital is profoundly bound to the pollution and the overexploitation of natural resources. Likening space exploration to the discovery of America may then be misleading and dangerous. There is –most probably— no new earth to be discovered through space conquest and it is, so far, unlikely that any relief can come from outer space for environmental pain. Furthermore, even if the possibility of human settlements on other celestial bodies was likely, would it still be right to neglect the terrestrial environment, with the idea that we can go and live elsewhere when we are done with this specific planet (again a scenario that science fiction likes: see for example the end of Isaac Asimov’s Foundation)? In a way, the presentation of space as a new area for conquest and expansion tends to deny that the model of the limitless exploitation of natural resources is facing a crisis.

#### Privatization of space leads to militarism – empirics prove

Marko, cyber activist, May 14 2003, “Anarchism and Human Survival: Russell’s problem.” https://www2.indymedia.org.uk/en/2003/05/68173.html

One may well ask what has all this to do with state capitalism? Consider the thinking behind the militarisation of space, outlined for us by Space Command; “historically military forces have evolved to protect national interests and investments” both military and economic. During the rise of sea commerce, nations built navies to protect and enhance their commercial interests. During the westward expansion of the continental United States, military outposts and the cavalry emerged to protect our wagon trains, settlements and roads. The document goes on, the emergence of space power follows both of these models. Moreover, the globalization of the world economy will continue, with a widening between a haves and have nots. The demands of unilateral strategic superiority, long standing US policy known as "escalation" or "full spectrum" dominance, compel Washington to pursue aerospace control". This means that, according to a report written under the chairmanship of Donald Rumsfeld, "in the coming period the US will conduct operations to, from, in and through space" which includes "power projection in, from and through space". Toward this end, Washington has resisted efforts in the UN to create an arms control regime for space. As a result there will inevitably arise an arms race in space. The importance of this simply cannot be over-emphasised. Throughout the nuclear age there have been a number of close calls, due to both human and technical error, that almost lead to a full scale nuclear exchange between Washington and Moscow. These glitches in command and control systems were ultimately benign because both sides had early warning satellites placed in specialised orbits which could be relied upon to provide real time imagery of nuclear missile launch sites. However the militarisation of space now means that these satellites will become open game; the benign environment in space will disappear if the militarisation of space continues. Thus if the US were to "conduct operations to, from in and through space" it will do see remotely. Technical failure may result in the system attacking Russian early warning satellites. Without question this would be perceived by the Russian's as the first shot in a US nuclear first strike. If these satellites were to be taken out then this ultimate guarantee disappears; the Russian ground based radar system has a number of key holes that prevent it from warning of an attack through two key corridors, one from the Atlantic the other from the Pacific. In the future if an event such as 1995 were to occur in space the Russians no longer would have the level of comfort provided by its space based assets. The militarization of space greatly increases the chances of a full scale accidental nuclear war. In other words, we are witnessing the integration of strategic conventional, nuclear and space planning into the command responsible for overseeing US nuclear forces. In turn these forces become an ordinary facet of US strategic planning, severing the break between conventional and nuclear war. The link between the increase in threats to survival and state capitalism (as well as globalisation) was provided for us by the old Space Command as noted above. We may justly also conclude that US nuclear weapons provide a shadow, enabling the deployment of offensive military firepower in what Kennedy era commander General Maxwell Taylor referred to as the key theatre of war, namely "under-developed areas". This shield was made effective by "escalation dominance", as noted above, now known as "full spectrum dominance". It is this facet of US strategic policy that compels Washington place such a premium on nuclear superiority and nuclear war fighting.

#### The mere presence of space weapons guarantees their use

**Mitchell - 2001** - Gordon Mitchell, member of Center for Strategic and International Studies Working Group on Theater Missile Defenses in the Asia-Pacific Region, The Fletcher Forum on World Affairs, Winter 200 l.p.97-98)

"A buildup of space weapons with capability to execute offensive missions might begin with noble intentions of "peace through strength" deterrence, but this rationale glosses over the tendency that" ...the presence of space weapons...will result in the increased likelihood of their use;" Military commanders desiring to harness the precision strike capability afforded by space-based "smart" weapons might order deliberate attacks on enemy ground targets in a crisis. The dizzying speed of space warfare would introduce intense "use or lose" pressure into strategic calculations, with the specter of split-second laser attacks creating incentives to rig orbiting death stars with automated "hair trigger" devices. In theory, this automation would enhance survivability of vulnerable space weapon platforms. However, by taking the decision to commit violence out of human hands and endowing computers with authority to make war, military world without US space mil ners could sow insidious seeds of accidental conflict. Yale sociologist Charles Perrow has analyzed "complexly interactive, tightly coupled" industrial systems, which have many sophisticated components that all depend on each other's flawless performance. According to Perrow, this interlocking complexity makes it impossible to foresee all the different ways such systems could fail. He further explains, "[t]he odd term 'normal accident' is meant to signal that, given the system characteristics, multiple and unexpected interactions of failures are inevitable." Deployment of space weapons with pre-delegated authority to fire death rays or unleash killer projectiles would likely make war itself inevitable, given the susceptibility of such systems to “normal accidents.”

#### Space conflicts outweigh nuclear war and lead to extinction

**Mitchell - 2001** (Gordon Mitchell, member of Center for Strategic and International Studies Working Group on Theater Missile Defenses in the Asia-Pacific Region, *The Fletcher Forum on World Affairs,* Winter 2001, p.98)

"It is chilling to contemplate the possible effects of a space war. According to Bowman, "even a tiny projectile reentering from space strikes the earth with such high velocity that it can do enormous damage-even more than would be done by a nuclear weapon of the same size!" In the same laser technology touted by President Reagan as the quintessential tool of peace, David Langford sees one of the most wicked offensive weapons ever conceived: "One imagines dead cities of microwave-grilled people." Given this unique potential for destruction, it is not hard to imagine that any nation subjected to a space weapon attack would escalate by retaliating with maximum force, including use of nuclear, biological, and/or chemical weapons. An accidental war sparked by a computer glitch in space could plunge the world into the most destructive military conflict ever seen."

#### The role of the ballot is to resist the capitalist structures of the status quo. Given the place of utopian imaginings in the debate space, that entails voting for the debater that best provides a space for the hopeful resistance against existing capitalist power structures

Skrimshire 6: Skrimshire, Stefan. Lecturer in Theology and Religious Studies at The University of Leeds. "Another what is possible? Ideology and utopian imagination in anti-capitalist Resistance." Political Theology 7.2 (2006): 201-219. https://doi.org/10.1558/poth.2006.7.2.201

The anti-capitalist movement, we might tentatively conclude (without embarking on the much more problematic question of who or where such a movement exists) is using utopian imagination of an “outside” as a means to undermine the self-evidence of a prevailing ideology, in order to shatter the cultural assumption that “there is no alternative.” But utopian rhetoric is commonly associated with a tacit admission that its visions are not possible at all. The classically pejorative connotation of utopianism is the imagination of the “no-place” of idealism, that which leads politics to the terror of obsessive perfectionism, or all-or-nothing mentality, or to the social palliative of dreams and visions. Even worse, there is a sense in which a utopian rhetoric has been the creed of late-capitalism as much as it has of anti-capitalism. Limitless acquisition and consumption is not just a therapy, it is salvation from the world: another world is possible: buy this lifestyle. Another identity is possible: buy this image. Another reality is possible: take this drug, play these games, surf this virtual reality…be someone else. In a culture of mass distraction, where imaginary realities are all already provided for, then it is true that “no ideology even needs to be injected.”14 Capital is already there, trading imaginations and providing dreams of an outside—legitimizing the quaint eccentricity (outside-ness) of utopian rhetoricians—to the depoliticized masses.15 On the other hand, there is a sense in which suspending the “given” world to give space to an untapped well of creative seeing is always part of people’s everyday resistances and refusals. This is what Paul Ricoeur has said about the significance of utopian thinking. It is the human capacity for vividly suspending the real that the relations that justify the received “real” (such as an unjust social order) can ever be contested: “…c’est dans cet état de non-engagement que nous essayons des idées nouvelles, des valeurs nouvelles, des manières nouvelles d’êtres au monde…”16 As Raoul Vaneigem wrote during the resistances of 1968, building an “ideal world” is what everybody does to affirm subjectivity in the face of a paralysing conformity: The only forms of creativity that authority can deal with, or wishes to deal with, are those which the spectacle can co-opt. But what people do officially is nothing compared with what they do in secret…seething unsatisfied desires, daydreams in search of a foothold in reality, feelings at once confused and luminously clear, ideas and gestures presaging nameless upheavals… Every individual is constantly building an ideal world within himself, even as his external motions bend to the requirements of a soulless routine.17 Scott observes that just the fact that subordinate classes have historically internalized a sense that oppressive relations are “inevitable” has never prevented their collective formation of “folk utopias”. The imaginations of a “world turned upside down,” performed in rituals such as the Carnival in the Catholic tradition or the Saturnalia in classical Rome, has continually provided the ideological motivation for revolt.18 The same can be said of an emerging folk-utopia in anti-capitalist protest, the imagination of a world turned upside down politically, economically, culturally, and therefore utopian inasmuch as it is “a more or less systematic negation of an existing pattern of exploitation and status degradation as it is experienced by subordinate groups.”19 What is crucially different in the context of “globalized” protest such as those against transnational bodies, that which couldn’t be addressed as simply the struggle of one subordinate group against a dominant one, is that the reversal of order to be imagined cannot be localized by one group’s interests. A new role for resistant imagination therefore emerges, requiring a broadening of vision to incorporate a rich diversity of dissent, a kind of globalization of utopian imagination. Something like an attempt at this has already been crudely enacted in anti-capitalist protest in the past few years. “June 18th” (J18) saw mobilized demonstrations and riots against global capitalism in financial districts in over thirty countries. London’s Square Mile saw many thousands of diverse protesters blocking roads, occupying banks and financial centres, bringing financial life to a standstill, even if only for an afternoon. There was a convergence of broadbased utopian slogans and rhetoric, a self-professed “carnival against capital” imagining “the earth is our common heritage” and a “world without multinationals.” As one protester commented, the shift that such demonstrations signal is a release from the constricting utopias of state ideologies (such as the Soviet model, or fundamentalist religious utopias) to one that invites people to fill in the blanks: Not only has the imagination been freed, it has also become more diverse and fluid than it was ever able to be under the shadow of the strict monolithic ideology of Soviet socialism. …there is not just one way, one utopia to apply globally, because that is exactly what the “free marketeers” are trying to do. The radical social movements…don’t want to seize power, but to dissolve it. They are not vanguards but catalysts in the revolutionary process…20 Utopianism, the imagining of different worlds, can therefore be understood in its globalized context as at once a manifestation of disillusionment—we don’t know exactly what we want, but it certainly isn’t this—and the primacy given the role

#### The dream of privatizing and colonizing space operates under the assumption of a permanent capitalist paradigm. That’s another link – any attempt to justify space colonization is precisely what the ballot must reject.

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This section continues the sociological examination of the case for space colonization by drawing on Fisher’s (2008) concept of capitalist realism. The social context of capitalist realism helps illuminate the case for space colonization in three ways: (1) Capitalist goals inform contemporary justifications for space colonization and, more fundamentally, the assumption that capitalism will carry on in the long-term is unquestioned. (2) The future fantasy of space colonization deters attention from more effective and just solutions to the ecological crisis. (3) The case for space colonization is only viable if there are no alternatives to capitalism. In other words, when social alternatives to capitalism are considered, space colonization as a climate change strategy is unjustifiable. We discuss each point in turn. That capitalism as a system is taken-for-granted in the case for space colonization, and capitalist priorities inform motives to colonize space, is not surprising when space colonization is framed as a solution to future ecological collapse. The only climate change solution strategies being widely adopted or seriously considered in policy circles and international organizations are solutions in line with capitalist goals. Project Drawdown (2021), for example, claims to offer the most comprehensive set of solutions to minimize global warming. Their mission is simple: “stopping catastrophic climate change — as quickly, safely, and equitably as possible.” Yet, all their solutions must meet five specific criteria, the second one being: “Is it economically viable? In other words, is there a business case?” (quoted in DiCaprio 2019). Only solutions that fit this “win-win” model are supported. Those that might be more effective but will not result in profits are discarded. Project Drawdown is only one example of the norm: solutions to the ecological crisis that reproduce rather than challenge the current social order (e.g., Foster et al., 2010; Stuart et al., 2020a). In a paradigm where all solutions must adapt to capitalism, we find justification for space colonization if other technological strategies are not enough to save humanity. Indeed, although rationalized by aspirations to save humanity, those who actually have control over the plans for space colonization seem to be focused more on maintaining the current system and chasing profit. Not only could a space colony unintentionally recreate the same social conditions that lead to its formation (see preceding section), but there is evidence that this may be precisely why space colonies would be formed in the first place. For example, Bezos envisions the Moon as the future “manufacturing sector of the universe” (Liberto, 2019). Or take the case of keeping a Martian colony warm: fossil fuels extracted on Earth could be burned in space transport and at colony sites, increasing fossil fuel profits. Relatedly, there are plans to mine Mars and the Moon for minerals to increase wealth accumulation. In addition, the companies working on space colonization projects are private companies with “pecuniary reasons” for their projects beyond saving (some of) humanity (Kovic, 2020: 5). As affluence represents a primary driver of the existential threats humans face (Wiedmann, Lenzen, & Keyßer, 2020), it is not surprising that the primary supporters of space exploration are billionaires trying to flee problems of the system that lined their pockets. The case for space colonization is not only a social-reproduction strategy in the sense that, if successful, it could maintain the current system and even allow those profiting from the current system to continue to benefit as Earth faces increasing threats. It is also a social-reproduction strategy because it deters attention from social alternatives that have the potential to address the ecological crisis. Like other “false solutions” to climate change that deter attention and resources from the need for systemic change to reduce emissions (Stuart, Gunderson, & Petersen, 2020b), hopes of escaping Earth’s problems through a future home on a space colony weakens the case for solving Earth’s problems. Why not trash the planet if a Golden Ticket to live in an “outdoorsy, fun atmosphere” on Mars awaits? In other words, the case for space colonization is another silver bullet narrative that delays concrete action and maintains the current system. Fisher would add here that the case for space colonization further allows ideology to escape from the contradiction that ecological collapse is built into the basic processes of capitalism. This reality is “too traumatic to be assimilated into the system” (Fisher, 2008: 18) and space colonization is a comforting futuristic fantasy to flee this trauma. Our claim that the case for space colonization is blind to social alternatives is illustrated by the extreme techniques necessary to make Mars colonization a real possibility, especially biotechnological alterations of the human body. As explained by Szocik et al. (2020), because the Martian environment is exceptionally harsh and different than Earth, we may need to change the human genome and characteristics to be more suitable for colonization. Mars has less gravity but much more radiation, which could inhibit maintaining human civilizations on Mars. Protective gear would be necessary, but sterility could still result. Szocik et al. (2020) also explain that living in isolated conditions is psychologically stressful and the human psyche may not be able to stand up to the pressures. Therefore, we may need a “radical modification and interference with ‘human nature,’ psychology, and anatomy” to cope with these new conditions and we also may need to modify ethical and moral standards (Szocik et al., 2020: 10). With all of the modification that may be necessary, Szocik et al. (2020: 12) asks, “Is there a sufficiently strong reason to go to space which justifies the enhancement of future astronauts?” In other words, it is easier to imagine the modification of the human genome to live on Mars than to imagine the end of capitalism. Such proposals are considered because changing the system continues to be an unattractive solution and to many, a “non-starter.” Kovic (2020: 5) explains that given the potential economic gains of technological development, space colonization “could be perceived as the more attractive option.” Green (2019: 37) makes this argument clear: considering the relative difficulties of establishing world peace and regulating the development of all dangerous technologies, settling on Mars may actually be relatively easy. It certainly has fewer political difficulties, though the technical ones remain immense. Green (2019: 37), therefore, concludes that space colonization is the “relatively-easiest solution to the problem of saving at least some of humanity.” In the eyes of most decision-makers, challenging the dominant social order, profits, and wealth accumulation simply is not an option. Capitalism remains inevitable and unquestioned: “there is no alternative.”

#### The continuation of capitalism reproduces the crises on Earth, and if those don’t wipe us out, existential threats in space will

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Kovic (2020) in the end argues that prioritizing space colonization as a survival strategy overlooks or ignores the high probability of existential threats and risks in space. The rapid creation of new technologies for space living may also create unexpected consequences and risks that could undermine or threaten space colonization. For example, on Mars, hostile conditions including dust storms, sub-freezing night time temperatures, and lack of water or carbon-dioxide to grow plants (Szocik, Wojtowicz, ´ Rappaport, & Corbally, 2020) could result in death, starvation, cannibalism and extremely stressful survival decisions causing “astronomical amounts” of suffering (Torres, 2018: 75). In addition, the space colonies currently proposed still would not protect humans from large-scale stellular events like supernovae or an expansion of the sun. As explained by Stoner (2017) in the context of a Mars colony, the same risks as well as new risks make the colony very dangerous and protective measures would be immensely expensive in a cost-benefit analysis: [i]f the goal is species survival, and given that the Martian environment is much less survivable than even a post-strike Earth would be, then there is no remotely realistic budget point at which the marginal dollar would be more effectively spent on Mars colonization than on protecting Earth and the creatures and civilizations that evolved to live within its shelters. Stoner (2017) goes on to argue that the analysis for the operations of projects like those of SpaceX, “only appears rational because they have carefully loaded the comparison scenarios in a way that guarantees a pro-colonization conclusion.” While space colonization may be a better preservation strategy than doing nothing, there are many more options that are less risky and more likely to preserve a greater number of human lives. Another commonly overlooked aspect of space colonization as a species survival strategy is the fact that not everyone will be able to go, and many of Earth’s commoners and poor will likely be left on Earth. Only a portion of the human population would be able to live off-planet, perhaps only the economic elite. It is not unreasonable to assume that, if there are large inequalities in power and wealth, that the most wealthy will be in power and that these elites will decide to be the “lucky” few space settlers. It is not possible for Mars, for example, to provide a safe habitat for all humans on Earth. Thus, a possible scenario is economic elites leaving behind the vast majority of humans on an inhospitable Earth. As Billings (2019: 45) questions, “how many poverty-stricken Bangladeshis, how many sub-Saharan Africans, how many permanently displaced Syrian refugees, how many disabled and unemployable workers could come up with $200,000 – or $2,000,000 for that matter – to move to another planet and start a new life. What are the ethics of giving the rich yet another advantage over the poor? What are the ethics of ignoring the need to check the rapid pace of climate change on our own planet?” Under capitalism, any solution to crises on Earth focused on moving off-planet will likely exclude the masses and the poor. Are these lives not worth saving? Are there other strategies that would save more lives? Saving the most present and future human lives would require addressing the threats on Earth, including climate change, biodiversity loss, poverty, disease, and famine. As stated by Kovic (2020: 6), “[g]iven these acute problems, pursuing space colonization today could be a misguided use of limited resources.” He poses the following question: If the goal is to save as many lives and to maximize overall wellbeing, then why focus on an alternative that only benefits a very small population, while the vast majority struggle to survive or perish? Others argue that much more than human lives need to be saved to live successfully off-planet; we need a diversity of other organisms and a measurable portion of the Earth’s biodiversity (Johnson, 2019). Given the rate of existential threats like climate change, how much time is there to develop this technology and transport all people and enough other organisms off-planet? If the goal is species survival, the time (and the immense resources required) could be spent in more effective ways to benefit all people and species. However, these alternatives are unseen or considered impossible in the context of capitalist realism (see proceeding section). Lastly, the current social order dominating human-human and human-material relations (capitalism) is likely to result in negative outcomes and problems even off-planet. For example, mining and development on Mars would very likely be environmentally destructive as colonization is unlikely to have a light impact on the planet (Stoner, 2017). We would bring these relations and the R. Gunderson et al. Futures 134 (2021) 102857 7 associated problems with us. As Marino (2019: 15) explains, [i]n Musk’s view we need a back-up planet. But he doesn’t acknowledge that we ourselves are the cause of this dire situation. And therein lies the problem and the reason we, as a species, have no business trying to colonize another planet. Musk’s reason for wanting to colonize Mars is to save ourselves from ourselves and it is self-evident that this alone recommends we should not be going anywhere. There is no reason to assume that we have learned our lesson on Earth and will create a new civilization with better outcomes, when the same system and drivers (namely, capital accumulation) continue to dominate the social order. Billings (2019) reminds us that while one may wish to “start fresh” in a new colony, humans will take the drivers of crises and collapse with them. These drivers and forms of logic are precisely why humans find themselves discussing the possibility of moving off-planet in the first place. This fact should inspire collective reflection and deliberative discussions on the purpose of life and alternative ways of organizing social relations to achieve this purpose. However, for irrational rationality, the latter substantive questions answered through communicative action are an irrelevant waste of time - at best, “mere opinion.” In contrast, the ostensibly “practical” and “realistic” technological rationality responds by designing ever-more sophisticated technics for the irrationally rational purpose of rushing off to space to continue the instrumental crusade of blind domination. This is the elevation of means to ends, the irony of contemporary instrumental reason diagnosed by the Frankfurt School. Rather than serving a better world, technological development and production today are ends to be pursued for their own sake. That is, because we can no longer set aims through reasonable criteria, we pursue aims, such as economic growth and technological development, that are set by a semi-autonomous economic system. For the Frankfurt School, these are irrational conditions because technology and economic activity should be instruments to serve humanity, rather than humanity serving technology and economic activity.

## Underview

#### [1] Yes 1AR theory – if the violation is in the 1NC, I should be able to respond in the 1AR. Comes first – they get 13 minutes while I get 7 to develop any theory args. Evaluate 1AR theory with no RVI’s – the 2NR could just collapse to the RVI but the 2AR can’t respond to 6 minutes of the RVI. Drop the debater to deter future abuse. Use competing interps – reasonability is arbitrary and forces judge intervention, competing interps creates a race to the top.

#### [2] Presumption affirms. A) we presume things true until proven otherwise, i.e. you believed me when I said my name was Lauren. B) It’s impossible to presume things false because then we presume that presumption is false but that also leads to a falsity, and it’s infinitely regressive.

#### [3] Permissibility affirms, actions are obligatory A) it’s better for us to take okay actions than permit bad things, and B) Otherwise we would need a proactive justification to do things like drink water.