**The standard is deconstructing ableism**

**First, the concern for the suffering and oppression of all minorities is an a priori to ethics and morality.**

**Kang 97:**

 (Yang Kang is a published philosophical writer in the Tijdschrift Voor Filosofie (Magazine for Philosophy). “LEVINAS ON SUFFERING AND SOLIDARITY. ”Tijdschrift Voor Filosofie, vol. 59, no. 3, 1997, pp. 495–500, JSTOR, September 1997, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40887754).

 Levinas' whole philosophy is, I believe, nothing but a series of unceasing reflections of these questions. As is well-known, he changed the whole framework by which we can think the meaning of suffering, the meaning of God and faith, and the meaning of morality. As a motto for this new framework and a new direction of thinking, Levinas has chosen Plato's expression: the Good beyond Being (epekeina tes onsiaj ; le Bien au dela de l’étre). This means: **the ethical has priority over** the ontological, It could even be said that the ethical **{and} is the foundation of the ontological.** Levinasian distinctions, for instance, between the Same and the Other, Totality and Infinity, the Saying and the Said. Otherwise than Being and Being, all these distinctions indicate this fundamental insight of the priority of the ethical, The ethical, i.e., my responsibility for the Other, one-for-the- Other, is, for Levinas, the source of all and every meaning. After the end of theodicy, i.e., after the collapse of conventional faith and morality, **the ethical alone can give meaning to life,** faith **and moral goodness.** It isn't, therefore, surprising that Levinas **{it} approaches human pain and suffering from an ethical perspective.** As we mentioned earlier, the most primitive reaction to pain and suffering is a cry, a moan, and a groan. This is the spontaneous reaction of a wounded man. In the utmost pain, pain too painful to be expressed in articulated words, there is no other means to express the extreme painfulness of pain other than just crying, moaning, groaning or sighing. Thi this reaction of the patient calls for action: action for help from the other. A cry, a moan, or a sigh is not locutionary, but perlocutionary (if I might make use of Austin’s terminology): it does not describe a fact ; it is a call (appel) for help. Precisely at this point, Levinas is very keen to show that can observe the double face of suffering: suffering is, on the one hand, extreme passivity, impotence, abandonment and solitude (Sl, 109/US, 158); it is an ,, enchainment to oneself" (T A, 36/ TO, 55), an , , impossibility of detaching oneself from the instant of existence” , ,, the very irremissibility of being" , ,, the impossibility of retreat” , an ,, absence of refuge”, and in this sense the ,, impossibility of nothingness" (TA, 55/TO, 69). On the other hand, suffering is unassummable and unassumability itself. Unassumability, or unseizability, this tells us of the existence of an absolute exteriority or absolute alterity which cannot be reduced to oneself by any means whatever. Therefore, in the unassumability, there is a possibility of a half opening, an opening of alterity ,, wherever a moan, a cry, a groan or a sigh happens there is the original call for aid from the other ego whose alterity, whose ex- teriority promises salvation. " (SL. 109-110/US, 158). This is to say that suffering, in its unassumability, in its groan and cry without any possibility of understanding and accepting it, opens up the possibility of a relation with the Other. The opening of a possibility of a relation with the Other is, however, in itself still a possibility, not an actuality. In this sense, Levinas calls this opening ,, a half opening.” **There must be,** therefore, **a reaction.** i.e., an action in answer **to the call of someone who is inflicted by pain.** This response to the call, to the appeal of the inflicted, the dispossessed, the poor, the persecuted or the stranger is to make oneself responsible for the other person. Being responsible for the other person is ,, ethical”  in the pure sense of the word. **The ethical, or being ethical, implies exposing oneself to the other person's pain and suffering.** In this context, Levinas proposes two theses: first, suffering opens upon suffering the ethical perspective of the inter-human; second, the just suffering in me for the suffering of the other person makes suffering meaningful which is otherwise intrinsically useless and unjustifiable (See SI, 110-111/US, 159). This is Levinas' answer to the question: ,, Is there any possibility to make suffering meaningful?"Levinas' answer has relevance, of course, to the question of the meaning of faith and morality after the collapse of theodicy.

I think it is very important to notice the fact that Levinas does not say, first of all, that suffering can be meaningful, if it is seen from an ethical perspective. Of course, he is concerned with whether a meaning could be found in the intrinsically meaningless suffering. ,, Ethics” could be an answer to that question: an ethical relation to the Other could provide meaning to suffering, Levinas here deviates from our expectation, He says instead: ,, suffering opens upon suffering the ethical perspective of the inter-human.” This means: suffering is not one of several themes which could be approached from an ethical perspective. Suffering is precisely the opening of the ethical perspective. This is to say: the ethical perspective can be opened, if and only if we listen to the cry and the groan of people afflicted with pain. I think this is the most fundamental message of Levinas. **The concern for the other person's suffering must be foremost ; all other factors,** for example, the respect for the moral law, happiness or the preservation of community **are of minor importance for ethics.** In **this context**, we can understand why Levinas **lays** so **much emphasis on the epiphany of face. The face of which** Levinas is speaking **is not the face of the king, the dictator or the rich, but** the face of the poor, the orphan, the widow, and the stranger: the face of a man or woman in suffering. As far as we are not confronted with this face which is in pain and suffering, we can live without any care for the other, we do our work, we can do business with people, we can have relations with other persons. This dimension of life is basically,, economic”: our way of dwelling in the world (TI, 125-149/ Tal, 152-174). When we are confronted with the face of the Other, and listen to him, then ethics infiltrates our economic life. Levinas writes: , , Ethics is an optics" (TI, xii/TaI, 23; cf.TI, xvii/TaI, 29; TI 51 ; Tal 78). If ethics is an optics, that is, if ethics is a look, what is then the object of this looking? Stars in heaven and the moral law in me? I believe, Levinas {it} intends the suffering face **of the unprivileged** people. Ethics is doing justice. Isn't it strange that all the great ethical systems of Western tradition, for instance, utilitarianism and the Kantian ethics of the modern age, have neglected the suffering of other persons?

**AND identifying ableism is necessary to inform change. Judges have an ethical obligation to reject it.**

**Cherney 11**

Vol 31, No 3 (2011) > Cherney The Rhetoric of Ableism James L. Cherney Wayne State University E-mail: jlcherney@gmail.comCherney 2011 Disability Studies Q 31:3

**Identifying ableism requires rhetorical invention**, for to critique a rhetoric that goes without saying requires new words. Neologism, strategically used, can help uncover the unexamined assumptions of a way of seeing the world. Burke explains: We learn to single out certain relationships in accordance with the particular linguistic texture into which we are born, though we may privately manipulate this linguistic texture to formulate still other relationships. When we do so, we invent new terms, or apply our old vocabulary in new ways, attempting to socialize our position by so manipulating the linguistic equipment of our group that our particular additions or alterations can be shown to fit into the old texture.39 Similar work has been done to establish the concept of "sexism." Until the word came into being and use, what it described operated in the open as acceptable patterns of thought. Oppressed women certainly might find such thinking objectionable, but without the word their critique lacks a specific target. In such a situation they may target another related concept, such as the institutions generated and protected by the attitude, as a way of expressing their dissatisfaction with the hegemonic oppressive orientation. The target may be chosen because it is closely linked with the attitude, because it is deemed a particularly heinous practice, or because it lies close to the border of acceptable behavior and is thus easily accessible. Once chosen, the target becomes the receptacle for dissatisfaction with the unnamed orientation, and efforts to remove the practice become closely aligned with repudiating the offensive perspective. Because attacking the target requires forging coalitions with those who may oppose the target for other reasons, this strategically important move can actually help protect the underlying oppressive orientation from discovery, and eliminating the target can be confused with eliminating the oppressive view. Continued dissatisfaction with the still unnamed premises of the oppressive system can lead to the acquisition of new targets, and the cycle begins anew. Yet **naming and calling into question the view itself raises the possibility of altering the very strands out of which the oppressive institutions are spun**. Identifying the view as problematic adds a critical dimension to the struggle by denying the simplistic perspective that sees altering a few target structures as a solution to the problem. Naming the view exposes its pervasiveness, assumptions, and implications to criticism. The struggle against sexism generally fits this pattern. Dissatisfaction with gender inequality has led to the removal of a number of oppressive measures but has yet to eliminate the ideological practice now named sexism. Early targets included the right to vote and property rights allowed to women, yet even once these institutional targets were eradicated, women still faced an oppressive attitude. The feminist movement made a critical step when it identified the lack of words that could identify the oppression of women. Betty Friedan addressed this issue specifically in 1963, and aptly described "The Problem that Has No Name."40 While Friedan's name for the problem ("feminine mystique") does not survive in contemporary nomenclature, she identified the impetus for naming the problem "sexism," a term that appeared a few years after her groundbreaking book.41 Giving the name sexism to the regime of gender oppressive behaviors, and exploring its extensive saturation of our paternalistic culture, has motivated and shaped feminist thought, critique, and action ever since. Grounded in the name, awareness of sexism can continue to evolve as social critics and activists expand our society's understanding of what the terms mean and how it continues to influence our culture. **When we first encounter the name "ableism," we understand it by analogy to words like sexism**, by our knowledge of its apparent roots ("able" and "ism"), and by the rules for combining roots into words. **A possible referent at this stage is hate crime against, abusive or mocking behavior toward, or Nazi Germany's genocide of people with disabilities.** Targeted here, many find ableism easy to reject and use the term to describe a distasteful way of acting. Ableism becomes problematic when individuals come across a case where their own seemingly benign opinions might be labeled "ableist." Using the label to identify an act or an opinion that fits within one's own orientation requires individuals to reconcile their own sense of self worth and their judgment of the issue in question. This neologist method of critiquing an antirhetorical rhetoric has certain advantages over other alternatives. In this approach empathy and understanding become tools in the struggle against ableism, for recognizing in oneself motives behind actions previously ascribed solely to the Other generates far more pressure to examine and explain those motives than when they can be quickly dismissed as somebody else's problem. We can think of the Other as a two-dimensional being, driven by indiscernible, illogical, and unrealistic ideas, but we resist thinking about ourselves in this way. Finding similarities between our thoughts and those we ascribe to Others not only allows us a measure of empathy and understanding, it expands our awareness of our own unexamined biases. Furthermore, this method maintains a process perspective of language and its relationship to thought. It is not necessary to have a complete understanding of ableism before beginning to recognize it, for that understanding can grow and evolve. Finally, this explanation puts the emphasis on one's perspective, orientation, or worldview. **Naming ableism in these terms allows us to recognize it as a rhetorical construct, sustained by articulation and iteration, and open to transformation by these same techniques.** This perspective can also suggest ways to align the struggle against ableism with the emancipatory projects of other oppressed populations. Focusing on specific rhetorical norms one can observe their use as warrants for other cultural prejudices, which reveals ways that questioning their validity and authority can challenge other discriminatory orientations as well as ableism. In contemporary society the norm "deviance is evil" is often applied to claims about fatness, where a cultural obsession with obesity declares it the greatest physical malady facing the current generation. Similarly, "body is able" appears in ageist discrimination against the elderly, and the natural process of living across time is equated with the social process of aging in which conventional devices regularly used as part of everyday life cease to work for a person with changing physical capabilities. The ability to use the phone or stairs depends on the social norms that make these devices acceptable and useful at least as much as it depends on physical capacity. Finally, the warrant "normal is natural" has played an overt and vocal role in discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer populations as heterosexual activity is described as normal and therefore the only natural form of sex. In each case, activists and scholars confronting ableism can find support, complementary theories, and political alliances with these groups, particularly as they struggle against a common rhetorical foe. Finally, focusing on ableism as rhetoric makes rhetorical responses more attractive. Political rhetoric seems much less empty when one understands that the problems confronted are also rhetorical in nature. The problem is not that deviance is bad, it is that ableism teaches seeing it that way. **The problem is not that being abnormal is unnatural, it is that ableism teaches valuing normalcy that way.** The problem is not that ability resides in the body, and that a body with different skills is inherently unable to function in society, it is that ableism teaches knowing ability that way. Confronting ableism as visual, ideological, and epistemic problems does not require us to set aside efforts to change the material order of society—such as working to provide access to public spaces—but it does empower disability literature, art, slogans, and protests as crucial to the effort to change what disability means. If we locate the problem in disability, then the ableist absolves his or her responsibility for discrimination and may not even recognize its presence. If we locate the problem in ableism, then the ableist must question her or his orientation**. The critic's task is to make ableism** **so** apparent and **irredeemable that one cannot practice it without incurring social castigation**. **This requires substantial vigilance, for ableist thinking pervades the culture**. For example, as I write this, I am tempted to use medical metaphors to explain the task and script something like "we cannot simply excise the tumor of ableism and heal the culture, for it has metastasized and infiltrated every organ of society." Yet this metaphor relies on an ableist perspective that motivates with the fear of death and turns to medical solutions to repair a body in decay. Using it, I would endorse and perpetuate ableist rhetoric, just as I would by using deafness as a metaphor for obstinacy ("Marie was deaf to their pleas for bread") or blindness to convey ignorance ("George turned a blind eye to global warming"). **The pervasiveness of these and similar metaphors, like the cultural ubiquity of using images of disabled bodies to inspire pity, suggest the scale of the work ahead, and the ease with** which one can resort to using them warns of the need for critical **evaluation of one's own rhetoric.** Yet the task can be accomplished. **Just as feminists have changed Western culture by naming and promoting recognition of sexism, the glass ceiling, and patriarchy**—admittedly a work in progress, yet also one that can celebrate remarkable achievements—**we can reform ableist culture by using rhetoric to craft awareness and political action.**

**AND ableism informs all other forms of oppression. Deconstructing ableism solves**

**Wolbring 08**

Wolbring, Greg, Development 51, (252–258) Associate Professor Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Past President of Canadian Disability Studies Association and a member of the board of the Society for Disability Studies (USA) http://secure.gvsu.edu/cms3/assets/3B8FF455-E590-0E6C-3ED0F895A6FBB287/the\_politics\_of\_ableism.pdf

**Sexism is** partly **driven by** a form of **ableism that favours certain abilities**, **and the labelling of women as not having those certain necessary abilities is used to justify sexism** and the dominance of males over females. Similarly**, racism** and ethnicism **are** partly **driven by forms of** **ableism**, which have two components. **One favours one race or ethnic group and discriminates against another**. The book The Bell Curve (Herrnstein and Murray, 1994) judged human beings on their ‘cognitive abilities’ (their IQ). It promotes racism by claiming that certain ethnic groups are less cognitively able than others**. The ableist judgement related to cognitive abilities continues justifying** racist arguments. Casteism, like racism, is **based on the notion that socially defined groups of people have inherent, natural qualities or ‘essences’that assign them to social positions,** make them fit for specific duties and occupations

**Contention 1 – Futurism**

#### **Any imagining of a more perfect world, is complicit in the logic of rehabilitative futurism that will always already render the disabled body as ontologically negative. imagining a better future is threatened by the notion of disabled child meaning futurism requires the cure or elimination of disability.**

**Mallow 15** The Disability Drive by Anna Mollow A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English in the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley Committee in charge: Professor Kent Puckett, Chair Professor Celeste G. Langan Professor Melinda Y. Chen Spring 2015 // UTDD

 “Let us begin our reexamination of Tiny Tim with a discussion of No Future, a text in which Tiny Tim takes a prominent position. No Future is a text with a target: the book takes aim at “the Child whose innocence solicits our defense,” a trope that Edelman names as the emblem of an ideology that he terms “reproductive futurism” (2). According to Edelman, commonplace cultural invocations of the figure of the Child (“not to be confused with the lived experiences of any historical children”) uphold “the absolute privilege of heteronormativity” (11, 2). Defying pronatalist social imperatives, Edelman names queerness as “the side of those not fighting for the children‟” (3) and urges queers to accept the culture‟s projection of the death drive onto us  by saying explicitly what Law and the Pope and the whole of the Symbolic order for which they stand hear anyway in each and every expression or manifestation of queer sexuality: Fuck the social order and the Child in whose name we‟re collectively terrorized; fuck Annie; fuck the waif from Les Mis; fuck the poor, innocent kid on the Net; fuck Laws both with capital ls and with small; fuck the whole network of Symbolic relations and the future that serves as its prop. (No Future 29) Elsewhere, I have argued that **No Future‟s impassioned polemic is one that disability studies might take to heart. Indeed, the figure that Edelman calls “the disciplinary image of the innocent‟Child” is inextricable not only from queerness but also from disability** (19). For example**, the Child is the centerpiece of the telethon, a ritual display of pity that demeans disabled people. When Jerry Lewis counters disability activists‟ objections to his assertion that a disabled person is “half a person,” he insists that he is only fighting for the Children: “Please, I’m begging for survival. I want my kids alive,”** he implores (in Johnson, Too Late 53, 58). **If the Child makes an excellent alibi for ableism, perhaps this is because, as Edelman points out,** **the idea of not fighting for this figure is unthinkable. Thus, when Harriet McBryde Johnson hands out leaflets protesting the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a confused passerby cannot make sense of what her protest is about. “You‟re against Jerry Lewis!”** he exclaims (61). The passerby’s surprise is likely informed by a logic similar to that which, in Edelman‟s analysis, undergirds the use of the word “choice” by advocates of legal abortion: “Who would, after all, come out for abortion or stand against reproduction, against futurity, and so against life?” (16**). Similarly, why would anyone come out for disability, and so against the Child who, without a cure, might never** **walk, might** **never lead a normal life, might not** **even have a future** **at all? The logic** **of the telethon, in other words,** **relies on** **an ideology that might be defined as “rehabilitative futurism,” a term that I coin to overlap and intersect with Edelman‟s notion of “reproductive futurism**.” If, as Edelman maintains, **the future is envisaged in terms of a fantasmatic “Child,” then** **the survival of this** **future-figured-as-Child is threatened by** **both queerness and disability. Futurity is** **habitually imagined** **in terms that** **[to] fantasize the eradication of disability: a recovery of a “crippled” or “hobbled” economy, a cure for society’s ills, an end to suffering and disease. Eugenic[s]** **ideologies are** **also grounded in** **both reproductive and** **rehabilitative futurism: procreation by the fit and elimination of the disabled, eugenicists promised, would bring** **forth a better future.**”

**Discussion over who inhabits space perpetuates power structures which kills otherized bodies. Reimagining who the “we” is that inhabits space is a prerequisite to establishing our place in space**

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“So, once again, why should we want to go live in space? One of the most crucial terms in that question, the one most in need of disambiguation, is “we.” **Who is the “we” that wants to go? And who is the “we” that gets to go? Who is the “we” that stays behind?** If the argument in favor of living in space is practical, based on the abundance of room and resources, who are the people that should have access to that material, energy, and space? If the argument is based on novelty—new experience, and on the potential for new social models and new knowledge—who collects that knowledge? And who benefits from it? **If the case for space depends on the premise that anyone who goes might have a chance to survive a cataclysm that could end human life on Earth,** **who gets to inherit that future? And whose future is foreclosed? Spaces have subjects: the design and production of a space is also partly the design and production of the people that are invited into that space.** The modernist architect and urban designer Le Corbusier created a system of dimensions and proportions for spatial design “based off of his conception of ideal human dimensions. He used this system to specify everything from the depths of countertops to the heights of buildings and the width of streets, in projects around the world. To justify his choice of six feet as the base height for his reference person, he wrote, “Have you never noticed that in English detective novels, the good-looking men, such as the policemen, are always six feet tall?”4 He had made a universal constant out of a male European authority figure. **Any conception of a specific space is also the conception of a specific “we” who that space is for, and sometimes the conception of that subject reinforces existing power structures instead of offering new ways to live.** When designers, planners, and geographers make space on Earth, all of the givens that define the world tend to broaden the perceived limits of subjectivity within space on this planet. Wherever we humans go on the surface of the planet, we can usually depend on finding breathable air, one g of gravity, and a temperature range that we can mitigate with clothing. Experimental musician and artist Brian Eno ” “wrote about the concept of a “big here” and a “long now” that can change the way people think about duration and location. **On Earth,** I’d add, many take for granted that **there is a “wide we”: one that collectively participates in efforts like space exploration, or collectively suffers from crises like the one happening to the climate. This is an illusion, and one that covers for the unequal distribution of blame, credit, and impact. Such a sense of a “wide we” can also gloss over the way design is used to include and exclude different people from different spaces.** For example, the standard temperatures of office environments are often set according to gendered prejudice, weight standards on objects determine what abilities make people eligible for jobs, and the slope and texture of a surface affects who can walk on it and who can’t. **In built environments in outer space, all of the given constants of Earth become variables: gravity, light levels, atmospheric composition and temperature, ambient sound and noise.** **And all can be fine-tuned and used, deliberately or accidentally, to include or exclude.** In space, all of the implied questions about how a world is constructed and how that construction is expressed, come to the fore, in a kind of crisis of specificity. This book is a survey of the roughly 150-year history of the idea that humans could and should live in space, off of Earth, for indefinite—maybe functionally infinite—periods of time. This is not a comprehensive account of every development and every layer of this idea, but more like a set of core samples from a timeline too complicated to be completely excavated or catalogued all in one place. The major portion of the book tells the stories of seven paradigms for living in space. Each one has its own unique answers to the question of why humans should go and live there, and each one has its own unique implications for life on Earth. In order to tell these stories, I draw on concepts from multiple spatial disciplines—architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and geography—and I will also rely on other fields that track the cultural imagination. For the purposes of this book, there are no hard and fast boundaries between space science and science fiction; both are places where people get to speculate about other worlds. Each of these seven paradigms crosses the blurry boundaries between fiction and science, and the contexts that surround each of them contain opportunities to identify critiques and counter-narratives. **All** of these **plans to make new space for future humans include, implicitly or explicitly, an idea about a “we”—that is, about who those notional humans are.”** “**Whether humans eventually go and live permanently in space or not, we will continue to see an ever more complicated and visible relationship between the creation and control of worlds and the collective subjectivity within them.** Regarding the climate crisis, the historian and postcolonial scholar Dipesh Chakrabarty told interviewer James Graham in a 2016 book, Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary, “**The moment we ask ‘what should we do?’ we discover that the ‘we’ needs to be constructed.** If the catastrophic changes in Earth’s climate, produced without conscious intention by human intervention, are to be addressed, then deliberate effort will have to be brought to bear on conditions that were previously considered unintended consequences. One way or another, a new world must be constructed, along with Chakrabarty’s new “we.” A “reduction in global carbon production, and a hold on, or reversal of, temperature rise, would be a demonstration of what sociologist and theorist Saskia Sassen calls a “capability”: a new technical skill that hadn’t been available before, whose implications and capacity might not be obvious right away.”

**Current criteria for astronauts proves Disabled bodies are left behind**

https://www.inverse.com/science/being-astronaut-is-no-longer-a-hardcore-male-domain

Since then, the qualifications for astronauts have expanded to include a more diverse range of people. But space still faces a severe diversity problem with the majority of astronauts being white, male, and having a military background. Of the 562 people who have flown to space, just 65 have been women. Applicants generally have to have a degree in science, technology, mathematics, or engineering (STEM). There are additional physical requirements such as near 20/20 vision, blood pressure lower than 140/90, and a height between 62 and 75 inches. But people with physical disabilities were never allowed to make the cut

The allowance of the idea of space travel to be our future while fundamentally excluding Disabled bodies serves as evidence of the upcoming erasure of them from the race. If space is our future after the earth implodes, who is left to implode on earth? Decisions around space are made to exclude these bodies rendering them dead in all visions of the future.

**Contention 2- cap**

**Space exploration is at present dominated by private capitalist interests**

**Marx 20**

Paris Marx (socialist writer and host of the Tech Won’t Save Us podcast). ”Yes to Space

Exploration. No to Space Capitalism.” June 2020, jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex elon

musk jeff bezos capitalism. [QC]

The space billionaires — Musk and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos foremost among them —

have little stake in the well being of the majority of the population. Their space visions

are designed for wealthy people like themselves, with little mention of where the work

ing class would fit in. They’ve built their wealth on exploitation, and their visions of the

future are little more than an extension of their present actions. A History of Violence The business practices of Musk and Bezos are increasingly well known and have been on clear display during the pandemic. Musk tried to claim Tesla’s Fremont, California factory was “essential” until authorities forced him to close it; then he reopened it in defiance of health orders. As Tesla CEO, Musk has a long history of opposing the unionization of workers, presiding over a high rate of worker injuries (which the com  pany tried to cover up), and even having a former worker hacked and harassed after he became a whistleblower. Meanwhile,  Bezos has a similar history of abusing Amazon workers. Amazon’s ware houses are known for having higher injury rates than the industry average, the company has fought unionization, and the stories of the terrible conditions experienced by workers are legendary. During the pandemic, that has continued, with the company failing to enforce social distancing or provide adequate protective equipment until workers be  gan walking out, refusing to be open about infection information, and firing workers who dared criticize the company, all while Bezos’s wealth has increased by more than $30 billion. But it goes beyond that, because the worldviews of these billionaires began to be formed long before they started the empires they currently lord over. Musk did not have a regular childhood, but rather a wealthy upbringing in apartheid South Africa. His father was an engineer and owned part of an emerald mine in Zambia, telling Business Insider, “We were very wealthy. We had so much money at times we couldn’t even close our safe.” In Elon Musk: Tesla, SpaceX, and the Quest for a Fan  tastic Future, Ashlee Vance describes how Musk got money from his father when he was starting one of his original ventures. He also had a particular admiration for his grandfather, who moved to apartheid South Africa from Canada after rallying “against government interference in the lives of individuals.” Bezos has a not dissimilar story. His father was a well off oil engineer in Cuba while Fulgencio Batista was in power. In Bit Tyrants, Rob Larson explains that Bezos’s father left the island after the Cuban Revolution and passed his libertarian views down to his son. Bezos’s parents invested nearly $250,000 in Amazon in 1995 as it was getting started. These space barons made their billions through the exploitation of their workers and came from well off backgrounds made possible from resource extraction. When digging into their visions for a future in space, it’s clear that they seek to extend these conditions into the cosmos, not challenge them in favor of space exploration for the benefit of all. The Future They Want. Musk and Bezos are the leading 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 Shouldn’t Serve Capitalists 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 isn’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.**

**As long as we live in a capitalist society we will never free the oppressed. Capitalism is what introduced us to discrimination… allowing for private space travel will oppress us all**

**Gleeson '98**

***Brendan Gleeson Justice and the Disabling City*** *Urban planning and governance Political economy of planning Social policy and the city The geography of disability Public land development Environmental policy and theory Transport and urban governance March 20, 1998, ISBN-10: 1572303115*

**A further major feature of urban disbalement is poverty, due largely to the exclusion of disabled people from main stream employment markerts observes that "Poverty is disability's close companion"** and, like Liachowitz (1988) and Oliver (1991), traces this relationship back to the growth of urbanization in 19th-century Europe. As I have argued elsewhere (Gleeson, 1993), **the motive force for this urbanization was the rise of competitive capitalism, a mode of production that fashioned workplaces, and entire cities, around industrial labor markets that excluded "slow" or "incapable" workers.** **The economies of contemporary capitalist cities thus reveal a legacy of discriminatory industrial labor markets by continuing to valorize nondisabled labor power over all other forms**. Both Liachowitz ( 1988) and Alcock ( 1993) argue that contemporary **capitalist cities both reflect and entrench disablement through their physical inaccessibility and discriminatory labor markets.** Alcock (1993) **draws** particular **attention to the link between inaccessibility and poverty, arguing that there are many "additional costs of coping with a disability in the able-bodied world"** (Alcock, 1993, p. 188**). Inaccessibility also often means that disabled people are unable to engage in mainstream consumption activities, thereby reducing their capacity to purchase goods and services at optimal prices. These goods and services include major urban consumption items, such as housing, education, transport, and finance** (Oliver, 1991).