The only *Standard* necessary for weighing the arguments for this debate is **minimizing** [**Oppression,**](https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/26381169.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ad13b996089c7301cd50616fb4ccb7504))“The general consensus is that an institutional hierarchy that unjustly harms lower-tier groups. Not surprisingly, one main source of disagreement is how best to describe the word "harm." One suggestion is to describe it in terms of "political, economic, and/or social-psychological [disadvantage."1 Other suggestions include psychological harm,2 or restriction to material resources,3 or a deprivation of freedom,4 or a deprivation of power,5 or a deprivation of social esteem, power, or authority,6 or dehumanization,7 or a deprivation of power, wealth, and prestige.8 And finally, there is the suggestion that the main harm of oppression is the deprived capability to develop one's capacities.” Chen, ‘17

We can discuss what is just and unjust, but if oppression of people exists, we know no other virtue is compatible. Thus, whichever side prevents oppression’s growth should win the round.

**Cont 1: The private entities investing in space have a history of imperialistic tendencies and only exist to turn a profit- to extend their reach into space is unjust.**

1. Private entities, by design, exist to create capital, and we know who’s raking all that in. Their effects, their methods, and their actions really don’t matter as long as the bottom line is expanded. When considering the rule of private companies in a new ‘space race’, we must consider its main actors. Let’s face it- due to an excess of funding and willpower, the first agents in outer space will be SpaceX and Blue Origin, both helmed by the richest men on the planet, Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos respectfully. And they have their own issues- Elon Musk has been legally charged with [union busting](https://www.vox.com/identities/2019/9/30/20891314/elon-musk-tesla-labor-violation-nlrb), and Bezos’ Amazon is a hotbed of ethical infractions, such as the infamous [‘workers having to pee into bottles because they are not allowed to take bathroom breaks’ scandal.](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/amazon-drivers-peeing-in-bottles-union-vote-worker-complaints/)’ As much as we like to pretend that perhaps the private entities in space will be benevolent, new titans of a modern age, we already know their names and sins.

“big businesses are having a very different year from most of the country. Between April and September, one of the most tumultuous economic stretches in modern history, 45 of the 50 most valuable publicly traded U.S. companies turned a profit, a Washington Post analysis found. Despite their success, at least 27 of the 50 largest firms held layoffs this year, collectively cutting more than 100,000 workers.” (https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/business/50-biggest-companies-coronavirus-layoffs/)

1. Entrepreneur's attitude to empty space is that of businessmen- turn a profit, and the rest will fall by the wayside. To mine resources, to build colonies- the truth of this advancement will mine the husk of other planets just like Earth. In regards to Musk’s plan to colonize Mars-“This Columbusing attitude — a strident business acumen laced with an imperialist ethos — comes with an air of benevolence: Musk doesn’t just want to colonize Mars to satisfy his ego. No, he wants to colonize Mars to help his fellow humans. “I really think there are two fundamental paths [for humans]: One path is we stay on Earth forever, and some eventual extinction event wipes us out,” he said. In this way, colonizing Mars is a “collective life insurance policy.” Although considering the last 500 years of colonization on this planet alone, one could wonder whose lives, according to Musk and other rich white men like himself, are worth being insured. But again, this impulse to enter the “space race” isn’t simply the embodiment of the American spirit of invention or forward-thinking entrepreneurship. Neither is it driven by the kind of nationalist Cold War fervor that inspired the creation of America’s space program in the 1950s. Rather, the impulse to colonize — to colonize lands, to colonize peoples, and, now that we may soon be technologically capable of doing so, colonizing space — has its origins in gendered {existing} power structures. Entitlement to power, control, domination and ownership. The presumed right to use and abuse something and then walk away to conquer and colonize something new...Indeed, there is no ethical consideration among these billionaires about whether this should be done; rather, the conversation is *when* it will be done.” [(Bianco, 2017)](https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/patriarchal-race-colonize-mars-just-another-example-male-entitlement-ncna849681) Whether you view this new ‘space race’ as the new frontier or just an ego trip for the uber wealthy, it cannot be ignored that the prominent mindset behind human expansion are the remnants of colonial thought. The expansion of such practices, with all its vices, is unethical and downright immoral.

**Cont 2: The private entities investing in space have a history of disregarding labour rights and will not seek to protect their workers** *“Is it right to think about the galaxy as a playground that is ours for the taking? History is full of examples of how individuals exploit others in order to gain access to limited resources like land, gold, water, and oil.”* [*Lee, 2015*](https://splinternews.com/colonize-mars-not-until-we-learn-some-lessons-here-on-1793847525)

1. Right’s Abuses- As Lee considers, a fundamental problem with expanding into space is the lives of the worker getting us there, but more pertinent, what their lives are like once they get there. As outlined above, the groundwork for these space missions, even in their smallest scale, will be laid by SpaceX and other such corporations. And speaking of SpaceX- they might just be the key example to how terribly these workers are being set up. An incident in 2005, where SpaceX engineers were building one of the company’s first launching pads on Omleck Island, and they were trapped on the island with few resources, including little food and water, for days on end. “We were left alone on an island. He [Elon Musk] made us work like slaves,” Altan said in a book called “Lift-off,” describing his early days in the company. While one incident, if this is our standard for how we treat those thrusting humanity into the abyss, how will they be treated outside of Earth? How will *we* be treated outside of earth?
2. Possibility of rampant lawlessness. Even if full colonization is still a bit away, the groundwork for it is laid right here, right now. “Considering how many parallels are being drawn to the expansion of American settlers into a “untamed” West, I worry that Mars exploration and colonization will be less about saving all of humanity and more about staking claims to profitable natural resources and establishing essential industries. After all, this kind of naked resource grab has happened before. The 19th century saw the rise of the American robber barons: The Vanderbilts, Mellons, Carnegies, Schwabs, Morgans and Astors, who took advantage of the lack of regulation and exploited the labor of others to establish financial legacies that persist nearly 150 years later.”[*Lee, 2015*](https://splinternews.com/colonize-mars-not-until-we-learn-some-lessons-here-on-1793847525) As we can see, when a new frontier is ravaged by money hungry entrepreneurs, the effect has always been harmful to not only the land, but the workers they employ.

Cont 3: With the appropriation of space by private entities, there would be functionally no regulation or ability to regulate by non-private entities

1. As already considered, private companies in space are not only a moral pitfall, but a death sentence to many innocent workers. We are creating a grim and abusive future for the worker. Most of us will be the serfs to men playing jetpack joyride up in the stars. They do what they please without consequence, they are untouchable by our modern metrics. “We have clearly not solved our issues here on Earth, and the truth is that space is far worse: a grim void incredibly inhospitable to human life, requiring thousands of ground support employees who spend hours planning everything from how astronauts poop to choreographing dangerous spacewalks. Because of the enormous potential outlay of resources, the Branson and Bezos flights will likely be only a few minutes long. It may also cut down on the chances for something to go sideways. Humanity is no more ready for a sustained commercial presence in space than we are to live on the seafloor.”Jacob Silverman in ’21 [Billionaire Space Race is a Tragically Wasteful Ego Contest, July 9, 2021 https://newrepublic.com/article/162928/richard-branson-jeff-bezos-space-blue-origin]

This is where we are now, with space flight being a strain on our social fabric all for the flights of fancy for the elites. It is immoral in its current application, it is immoral in its colonizing rhetoric, and it is immoral in its future applications for exploitation.

These men play God. They had the idea that they must satiate the need to advance, to grow, to capitalize on what we have not yet explored, and sell it to the highest bidder. But eventually when we view work as infinitely expandable, we reach a point where the workers creating this ‘new frontier’ will be fed to the inescapable abyss of unforgivable space. If private entities are allowed to pillage space, the cater to line their pockets will go swimmingly, but the rest of us will be thrown out of the airlock.

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**Jacob Silverman in ’21 [Billionaire Space Race is a Tragically Wasteful Ego Contest, July 9, 2021 https://newrepublic.com/article/162928/richard-branson-jeff-bezos-space-blue-origin]**

**“The best argument against the billionaire space race is how little impact it will have on the lives of most of Earth’s inhabitants. It will inaugurate a new era of ultra-expensive stunt tourism, perhaps, but it will do nothing for the common good, especially when companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin are competing to crowd low-earth orbit with thousands of small satellites. Vast and unearned fortunes have been spent on what are essentially private entertainments: Bezos has said that he sells $1 billion in Amazon stock each year to fund Blue Origin. It’s also no coincidence that the planet’s two richest men are pursuing these efforts after seeing their fortunes rise by tens of billions during the pandemic. They simply have too much money. At a time when our earthly inequities could not be more clear, it is obscene to allow moguls to pour their untaxed billions, earned on the backs of precarious workers, into private ventures divorced from everyday concern or accountability.”**