### DA

#### Global agriculture is killed by climate change – specifically small farmers suffer

**Cartier 21** [Kimberly M. S. Cartier, News and Features Writer, “Global agriculture will be drastically altered by climate change,” <https://www.greenbiz.com/article/global-agriculture-will-be-drastically-altered-climate-change>, February 18, 2021, Accessed on 12/14/21, rpHS-VM]

In much of the world, climate change is altering regional growing conditions and making them more unpredictable. Farmers are finding it harder to consistently grow enough food to meet increasing demand. Securing the world’s food supply for the future, experts assert, requires us to tally the good and the bad in the current agricultural structure, including the infrastructure and technology in food distribution systems. Small farms, which account for about 90 percent of the world’s 570 million farms, are particularly vulnerable to changes in seasonal climate. Land tended by families for generations suddenly may become nonarable. A change in the timing or intensity of yearly rainy seasons or the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), for example, could bring rains or drought that wipe out a family’s crops. In early May, the Nzoia River burst its banks. The floods that resulted in western Kenya capped off particularly heavy long rains that killed 237 people and adversely affected more than 800,000. Floods and landslides destroyed homes, schools, roads, bridges and more than 8,000 acres of Kenyan farmland. Kenya’s March-May rainy season (the long rains, as opposed to the short rains of October-December) provides vital moisture to the country’s croplands — indeed, maize production was at least 10 percent above average in 2020 — but most Kenyans continue to face some level of food insecurity. In the past few years especially, climate change has caused a geographical shift in which areas receive rain and which suffer drought. "Normally, we know where the flood areas are, but the rains the past few years have been unprecedented," said Ruth K. Oniang’o, founder of the Rural Outreach Africa Program and a 2017 Africa Food Prize Laureate. "We have rain falling in areas that never used to have rain. I used to write all the time about famines and drought … but right now is something different. We can say, ‘OK, climate variability, it changes every year.’ No. This is different right now." The differences extend beyond Africa. Farmers in Iran, for example, share similar problems anticipating cycles of drought and floods despite being separated from their Kenyan counterparts by more than 4,350 miles. "The recent harsh droughts and heavy floods in the [Middle East] region ruined a major part of food resources," explained Mohanna Zarei, a water resources engineer at the University of Kurdistan in Sanandaj, Iran. Sporadic precipitation cycles not only reduce crop yields but also can lead to secondary impacts that worsen food security, such as the wildfires that have ravaged the western United States, Australia, Brazil and elsewhere. Financial and social inequality compound climate-related food security issues. Many of the world’s smallholder farmers are poor and food insecure; even one lost season can push them from struggling to failing. "Climate change plays a key role as a catalyzer" in amplifying preexisting resource problems and "will influence the quality and quantity of food we produce and our ability to distribute it equitably," Zarei said. "It’s not quite as simple as moving into less climate-affected areas. It remains an issue of climate and socioeconomic and technological development," said Weston Anderson, a hydroclimatologist at the International Research Institute (IRI) for Climate and Society at Columbia University. Understanding how agricultural practices and policies need to change along with the warming climate and then sowing the seeds of that change could be the difference between farmers thriving where they are or migrating to greener pastures. Stressing the climate system A region’s agricultural stability depends on reliable, natural climate variations to bring seasonal shifts in weather. Large-scale climate modes such as ENSO and the Indian Ocean Dipole govern a region’s temperature, precipitation and storm activity for months at a time. Climate modes also causally connect distant regions, something increasingly important as agricultural trade has become more global: A climate shift in one food-growing region also can affect crops half a world away. Maize farmers around the world felt the impacts of climate teleconnections during one of the strongest El Niños of the past 150 years. The 1983 El Niño coincided with the largest global synchronous failure of maize crops in modern record, and recent research has shown that ENSO played a major role in causing that failure. Often you see climate change acting on top of this climate variability and exacerbating stresses that are already existing in our food system. "The El Niño-Southern Oscillation, because it organizes global weather and global precipitation, provides structure on the risk of global agriculture by rearranging where we get more drought and less drought in the year," Anderson explained. "It’s not necessarily creating more drought over the entire year, but it might be arranging those droughts in a way that disproportionately affects some of our crop growing regions." Anderson’s team found that ENSO is the only mode of climate variability that can affect maize, wheat and soybean crop production on a global scale. Other large-scale climate modes have more localized influence on certain crop yields. The tropical Atlantic variability, for instance, influences maize production in western Africa and wheat and soy production in southeastern South America simultaneously, but the North Atlantic Oscillation affects only wheat production in northern Africa and Europe. "Climate will largely continue to affect our food system through climate variability," Anderson said. "Often you see climate change acting on top of this climate variability and exacerbating stresses that are already existing in our food system." For example, he said, a regional crop might withstand a normal ENSO-related drought but could fail if climate change-induced drought worsens, too.

#### Space agriculture solves

**UNOOSA 19** [United Nations: Office for Outer Space Affairs, “Benefits of Space: Agriculture,” <https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/benefits-of-space/agriculture.html>, 2019, Accessed on 12/14/2021, rpHS-VM]

Agriculture forms the basis of the world's food supply. Soil conditions, water availability, weather extremes and climate change can represent costly challenges both to farmers and the overall food security of populations. Space-based technology is of value to farmers, agronomists, food manufacturers and agricultural policymakers who wish to simultaneously enhance production and profitability. Remote sensing satellites provide key data for monitoring soil, snow cover, drought and crop development. Rainfall assessments from satellites, for example, help farmers plan the timing and amount of irrigation they will need for their crops. Accurate information and analysis can also help predict a region's agricultural output well in advance and can be critical in anticipating and mitigating the effects of food shortages and famines.

#### Food justice is key and wins the round under my opponent’s framework

**FP 21** [FoodPrint, GRACE Communications Foundation develops innovative strategies to increase public awareness of the critical environmental and public health issues created by our current industrial food system, and to advocate for more sustainable alternatives, “Food Justice,”, <https://foodprint.org/issues/food-justice/>, 3/11/21, Accessed on 12/14/21, rpHS-VM]

People of color are the most severely impacted by hunger, poor food access, diet-related illness and other problems with the food system. The food justice movement works not only for access to healthy food for all, but also examines the structural roots of these disparities — and works for racial and economic justice, too. This work isn’t new. What gets lost in the predominant narrative about urban white foodies obsessing over the latest food trend and statistics on poor health outcomes for minority groups is that people of color have been bringing historical injustices in the food system to light and have been working toward empowering alternatives. Why Food Justice Is Necessary The dominant food system, with its cheap, empty calories and ubiquitous fast food joints, leaves many Americans undernourished and unhealthy — and the brunt of those results are borne by low-income communities of color. Nationally, the rate of food insecurity for African-American households is more than double that of white households, while one in five Latinos are food insecure — compared with one in ten whites and one in eight Americans overall. 12 Heart disease, cancer, diabetes and stroke are among the most common causes of illness, disability and death in the US. The factors that lead to these chronic conditions, including lack of access to healthy food, can be more common for minority groups. For example, Native Americans are 60 percent more likely to be obese than US whites, and the rate of diagnosed diabetes is 77 percent higher among African-Americans, 66 percent higher among Hispanics, and 18 percent higher among Asians than among whites. 3 But we cannot look at these as isolated facts, separate from a larger context. Food insecurity and high rates of diet-related disease correlate with poverty, which disproportionately impacts people of color. This is no coincidence — a long legacy of discriminatory and inequitable policies has left historically-oppressed peoples to start off with less wealth, property and opportunity than white people. 4 In addition to the racialized roots of poverty, the food system itself is built on centuries of exploitation of people of color. The roots of today’s hunger and health inequities run deep.

### K

#### Private entities include people and nonprofits – not just greedy corporations

**Law Insider No Date** [“Private entity definition,” <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/private-entity>, rpHS-VM]

means any natural person, corporation, general partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, joint venture, business trust, public benefit corporation, nonprofit entity, or other business entity. Private entity means any entity other than a State, local government, Indian tribe, or foreign public entity

#### Space should instead be seen as a metaphor for possibility – this isn’t just post-colonial ramblings; it’s fundamentally realistic to the identities of the colonized

**Reed 13** [Anthony Reed, Associate Professor of English at Vanderbilt University, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Fall 2013), pp. 118-139 (22 pages), “After the End of the World: Sun Ra and the Grammar of Utopia,” https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/blackcamera.5.1.118]

In the past decade or so, Ra’s work and pronouncements have been the subject of a surge of attention—with many monographs, book chapters and articles supplementing a tremendous, heterogeneous archival project making his many recordings, poems, interviews, broadsides and polemics available for public consumption and analysis. However, in the criticism, the precise nature of the conjuncture between the ancient, the present and the futur- istic has remained somewhat undertheorized. Graham Lock, alone in his willingness to consider Egypt as something other than a figure of a glorious past to be recovered, identifies space as “the site of a mythic future that he proposed as the alter(native) destiny to the Christian notion of heaven” and sees the invocation of Egypt as part of a process through which Ra revised the tradition of the spirituals sung by the enslaved Africans.6 Most critics, including Lock, typically posit “space” as a metaphor, and understand the (largely visual) references to Egypt as continuous instead part of a genealogy of such scholars as Cheikh Anta Diop, George G. M. James and Martin Ber- nal. Thus, John Szwed can argue that “space was both a metaphor of exclu- sion and of reterritorialization, of claiming the ‘outside’ as one’s own, of ty- ing a revised and corrected past to a claimed future” and “a metaphor which transvalues the dominant terms so that they become aberrant, a minority po- sition, while the terms of the outside, the beyond, the margins, become the standard.”7 Space, in other words, is at once a way of literally describing the position of African Americans, a means of enjoying that position between being inside and outside of mainstream society, and a reversal of those norms through critical reorientation. Ajay Heble also identifies outer space “as a metaphor for possibility (or, perhaps, for doing the impossible), for alter- natives to dominant systems of knowledge production.”8 John Corbett goes the furthest, first citing the phrase “going way out” as “a common phrase in jazz for a solo that transgresses a widely held musical code, such as the es- tablished harmonic framework” and then, though he acknowledges an ob- jective “unreality of existence for people imported into New World servitude and then disenfranchised into poverty,” he refers to outer space as “a meta- phor being elsewhere.”9 Space thus “becomes the testing ground for the lim- its of metaphor,” or perhaps better a metaphor of metaphor, an “ec-centric margin—a place that simultaneously eludes and frightens the oppressive cen- tered subjectivity” of the bourgeois and ruling classes, “a metaphor of being elsewhere, or perhaps of making this elsewhere your own.”10 These accounts have in common presenting two distinct metaphors as only one. On the one hand, space figures utopia, allowing the marginalized agency through re-configuration of history (the glorious roots in African civilization is subordi- nated to this project as the past for which the future African Space Program can be imagined). On the other hand, race as a process of “epidermalization” is turned against the dominant culture, and becomes the intrusion of a pri- vate world into the public—making “space” a gap within the smooth func- tioning of official ideology. Space in either account is either escape or re- treat, and the reading subject is always presumed white and/or aligned with official power. What is missing is that moment Adélékè Adéèkó describes as central to any revolution, especially the slave revolt, where the office of the master—the power structure itself—is threatened. Resistance without that imagination is mere gesture. Within this essay, I want to pursue the possibility that space is a revolu- tionary trope. I will begin by prioritizing what I see as a distinction in Sun Ra’s work between liberty—which might include the various forms of resis- tance and self-governance implied in the elsewhere these critics posit—and a more difficult, but more pressing concern: freedom. This is bound up in the kinds of questions we ask of cultural texts, and the kinds of actions we value as critics. Understanding space as a metaphor, in this case, makes Sun Ra, de- spite everything, fundamentally a political realist, and inadvertently makes the political struggle into an appeal for recognition, while linking Sun Ra to his historical moment in an overly determinant manner. Given Ra’s own am- bivalence toward the “space age,” and his elliptical speech and thinking, there is little more ambiguous than “space” in his lexicon. If it is a metaphor, it is not a metaphor that works as a relay of sense from one established domain to another, but a way of opening up language to remove or circumvent what W. E. B. Du Bois termed the “limitations of allowable thought”—ideology it- self.11 It is from this question—the simultaneously utopian/dystopian status of space—from which I will proceed, focusing especially on the 1974 feature film Space Is the Place (dir. John Coney), which served as a quasi-vehicle for Sun Ra. It is because Ra did not exercise total control over his presentation that this film offers an especially rich occasion to consider not only the am- biguities of Ra’s own politics, but the larger questions of the utopian imagi- nation with which I have framed this discussion.12 In particular, this film re- veals the dialectical relationship between utopia and dystopia, and between genuine freedom and consensual or bourgeois liberty. We might best under- stand space as a figure through which Ra attempted to form a community rooted in common feeling and common dissatisfaction, a common desire to break with the narrowly proscribed regime of the possible, in short a figure through which to imagine freedom beyond the bounds of extant ideology. In this way, it is no metaphor but a catachresis, a figure that invents sense by using figures in a more or less arbitrary name to invoke what is other- wise unthinkable, or unthought. To use another term key to Sun Ra, it is a myth—a caesura of thought aimed at attempting to imagine an unimpeded future, which still retains the risks of authoritarianism and reactionary for- mations, but also the promise of something greater than itself that cannot yet be named. The difficulty is that, as with any catachresis, space must also be taken literally as the introduction of a gap or void that punctures ideolo- gy’s pretense to eternity, and an opening for the new.

#### It's necessary to create counter-narratives because the current conceptualization of space is limited to a “country-club for billionaires”

**Spencer 17** [Keith A. Spencer, writer, “Keep the Red Planet Red,” <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/02/mars-elon-musk-space-exploration-nasa-colonization>, Jacobin, 02/05/2017, Accessed on 12/11/21, rpHS-VM]

The public and media reaction to Musk’s presentation — more than the presentation itself —reflects the current state of our politics. “The mood at the conference was almost as giddy as a rock concert or the launch of a new Apple product, with people lining up for Mr. Musk’s presentation a couple of hours in advance,” wrote Kenneth Chang in the New York Times, who devoted 1,200 words to it. “Elon Musk finally told the world his vision for colonizing Mars, and it turned out to be one hell of a show,” exclaimed Loren Grush in a video article for the Verge. Grush noted that Musk drew an “insane crowd,” describing how “people actually stampeded into the hall where his lecture was in order to get a good seat.” He began in lofty tones: “I want to . . . make Mars seem possible. Make it seem as though it is something we can do in our lifetimes.” This statement implied that we needed some great technological leap forward before embarking on this adventure, but, in fact, travel to Mars has been possible for well over half a century. Given the political will, we can go right now. The subtext of Musk’s message, then, was that our democratic governments will never execute big science and engineering projects. People should trust in the private vision for colonization and space travel instead. In Earth politics, this lack of faith in democratic institutions is nothing new. This idea’s policy implications — that collectively we can’t have big public projects or any sort of real democratic decision-making, and must cede our whims to privately funded foundations and technocratic “experts” — have already taken hold of most countries. As far as I could find, none of the magazines that covered Musk’s announcement mentioned this metatheme, namely, that a public and democratically organized colonization of Mars will never happen. No one questioned the premise that we must let billionaires decide how and when to go to Mars — or that it is the only possible way to get there. Musk’s tech-industry social circle benefits from branding technology as synonymous with progress. As a result, many tech employees work long hours to achieve this invisible notion of progress, but their work just fattens their employer’s profit margins. One can imagine the grueling labor required to make an inhospitable planet habitable. On Mars, employees would exhaust themselves for a corporation under the guise of “survival.” After all, regardless of whether a foundation or a corporation spearheads the colonization effort, they will be incentivized, even forty million miles away, to squeeze as much labor out of their workers at the lowest cost. Further, the question of who is allowed to go to Mars will become as important as the question of who isn’t. If, as Musk proposes, the trip requires a “ticket” — which, as he claims, will eventually drop to only $100,000 — it seems probable that those who can afford to go will mostly resemble, ethnically and politically, Earth’s ruling class. Imagine: the red planet turned racist country club. These questions matter more than how to engineer a rocket or how to build greenhouses or how to harvest water. In fact, state-funded research has already largely solved these technical problems — or, at the least, led to numerous creative ideas about making a Mars colony self-sufficient.

#### The alternative is embracing indo-futurism

**Bandodkar 21** [Priya Bandodkar, interaction designer, animation specialist and interdisciplinary media artist, “Activating Indofuturism,” <https://priyabandodkar.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Bandodkar_Priya_2021_MDES_DIGF_THESIS.pdf>, 2021, Accessed on 12/18/21, rpHS-VM]

Inspirations from Postcolonial Futurisms Considering the overlap of postcolonial experiences between Indian diaspora and the diasporas worldwide that were historically colonised, the ethos of Postcolonial Futurisms, that emerged in these communities to address postcolonial issues, can be adapted to develop the vision for Indofuturism. Just as one of the intents of Afrofuturism is to present a vision of African people in the centre of a future to help reimagine social conditions of African people in the present within its community and worldwide, Indofuturism has the potential to extend a similar intent for India. An example of this aesthetic of Afrofuturism is seen in the Marvel movie Black Panther (2018). Although a commercial venture, the outreach and interest generated by the movie in global audiences about African lifestyle and culture suggests that it is worthy of analysis outside of its mainstream appeal. Black Panther is an “empowering depiction of Black characters” (Becker 2) as it communicates a decolonised picture of Black people thriving and living fully with honour and dignity. The fictional Afrofuturist utopia in Black Panther, Wakanda, emblematises a thriving African nation: a merging point of technological and societal advancement with cultural values, and a subversion of race and gender norms and assumptions (Shillingford, Aisha et al). I envision Indofuturism as seeking inspiration from this decolonisation approach, especially from the use of Wakanda, as a medium to communicate empowerment and to reimagine the evolution of India in its natural environment towards a thriving Indofuture. I propose Indofuturism also draw upon works of Indigenous Futurists, such as Skawennati, that embed cultural references within the narratives and thereby contribute a refreshed perspective of the culture and aid its adaptation into the modern world. This approach might be useful in addressing the issue of alienation of the contemporary Indian community, especially the youth, towards their pre-colonial culture. Unique Characteristics of Indofuturism Considering the fact that India has already lived a fabled utopia prior to its colonisation, or the “Golden Bird” era, it would be rather convenient to reproduce this era (with a futuristic flavour) and present it as the Indofuture. However, this approach would fail to address any of the social challenges that haunt contemporary Indian communities. The present-day situation necessitates Activating Indofuturism – Priya Bandodkar 15 the inclusion of an approach, unique to Indofuturism, that critically highlights social predicaments that are toxic for these communities. The disadvantage in calling direct attention to these social issues is that it might incite rejection instead of acceptance, due to the levels of sensitivity people might associate with them. Marina Gorbis in her article, The Future as a Way of Life (2016), states “the future is often a safe place,” where people can imagine new possibilities through the medium of the fictional world (Gorbis). This idea also seems to be employed in an initiative started by a community of cultural strategists called Wakanda Dream Lab. This initiative called, Black Freedom Beyond Borders: Re-imagining Gender in Wakanda uses the fictional world of Wakanda as a medium to seek response to questions on safety, wellbeing of Black and Indigenous women, trans people and gender non-conforming people (Shillingford et al.). I propose Indofuturism to utilise this unique and vital quality of safe space within the medium of “future” to critically situate difficult social issues that have been infesting the contemporary Indian community. These can be pressing issues that may not necessarily be directly rooted in colonialism but might have surfaced or intensified during post-colonial times. A distinct characteristic of Indofuturism that distinguishes it from other Postcolonial Futurisms is that it hails a diaspora, which in spite of its regional cultural flavours, shares a relatively uniform cultural experience. Indofuturism speaks to this connected culture and creates room for a majority of the people in the community to partake.

#### This creates new post-colonial utopian fiction-making (which is already being replicated in Indo-futurist spaces). It forms models of hope, justice, and order that apply both in the realm of the writing and its effects on the people.

**Dutton 12** (Jacqueline, “Flipping the Script on Africa’s Future in the United States of Africa by Abdourahman A. Waberi,” Spaces of Utopia: An Electronic Journal, 2nd series, no. 1, 2012, pg. 34-55)

It is Ralph Prodi’s *The Quest for Postcolonial Utopia* (2001), that is the foundation stone for this new research field, drawing our attention to the “particular genre that has been neglected in the course of the revision process initiated in literary criticism: the utopian novel and its related literary forms” (Pordzik, 2001: 1). Pordzik contends that postcolonial utopias defy generic and cultural boundaries in ways that break with western utopian traditions to promote “epistemological otherness” (*idem*, 130). The resulting texts resemble globalised heterotopias, transcending national and western models in their fictions of the future. In its emphasis on the “post-western” utopia – going beyond the western traditions – Pordzik’s study suggests new ways of reading the contemporised and hybridised postcolonial utopia at the endpoint of the evolutionary process away from the West. Postcolonial writing on alternative futures therefore allows authors to explore the past, present and future of their communities from a particular postcolonial crosscultural point of view (*idem*, 156). Far from expressing a utopia that corresponds to traditional ideological norms, including social realism, systemic closure, static political principles, and a belief in reason, technology and social progress, postcolonial utopian texts are more organic in their creativity, seeking a radical otherness in a differentiated evolution of the community. These texts present fictional worlds that place imagination over reason – sometimes resembling magical realism – attesting to a “broader transculturation process within which the different writers can position their own particular views of race, gender, and identity with regard to futurity” (*idem*, 164). A typical example of this writing, such as Nadine Gordimer’s *July’s People*, would in fact appear dystopian, with a critique of the colonial society, and potentially also paint a negative picture of the post-colonial society that has been installed. However, after interrogating the status quo, in most cases a glimpse of utopia will sparkle through the gloom to indicate the path towards better transcultural and transnational futures. The tragic proportions of much western dystopian writing are therefore replaced by spaces of hope (*idem*, 130). The “fiction-making” aspect of the utopian novel (as opposed to the socio-political criticism) is integral to this process, as this is the only sphere in which the imaginary of the ideal can be fully extrapolated as an alternative reality. Pordzik’s argument seems to falter slightly when he supports the recognition of a “global culture” that produces “transnational fictions which, although their stress is on difference and diversity, consolidate the multitude of narratives they draw on in a strikingly new and coherent representational contract” (*idem*, 117). The sway towards reducing the specificity of historical experiences and political struggles in postcolonial writing, with an all-embracing sweep across Anglophone literatures demonstrates an underlying tendency to establish more binaries (western imperial/postcolonial), just as the *littérature-monde* movement has done between Francophonie and *littérature-monde*. The aim of this article is to go beyond such binaries to highlight the way in which postcolonial utopias are obliged to cross the colonial-postcolonial divide not only once, but twice. In most utopian theory to date, not only are the generic parameters of utopia based on western traditions, but the conceptual content is also related to western models of order, justice, desire and hope.5 Part of the project in reconsidering the role of postcolonial utopias must therefore be to unpick the stitches that tie utopia so tightly to western paradigms of form and content, and to understand the diversity of specific traditions that inform their creators, as well as the ways in which they contest the binaries imposed upon them.

#### Debate is a game, a competition, and online it becomes a video game. This makes it the necessary space to create futures and reflect upon ethical decisions. The role of the ballot is to award whoever uses politico-aesthetic technologies best to achieve social irrealism.

**Shaw and Sharp** 13 [Shaw, I., and Sharp, J. School of Geographical and Earth Sciences; The University of Arizona, “Playing with the future: social irrealism and the politics of aesthetics,” 2013, rpHS-VM]

For many game players, games exist for entertainment, for passing the time, for fun. They are a diversionary activity, meant for relaxation or distraction – a ‘notwork’ space where players are free to engage in fantasy narratives, amazing feats, and rewarding tasks. But what if certain games have become something more? What if some games, and the more general concept of ‘play,’ not only provide outlets for entertainment but also function as means for creative expression, as instruments for conceptual thinking, or as tools to help examine or work through social issues (Flanagan 2009: 1) Even a cursory observation reveals that video games are inscribed by a myriad of narratives (see Hones 2011 for more on ‘narrative space’), produce a range of dystopian and utopian landscapes, and create characters and monsters that blur all kinds of boundaries— transgressing as well as reinforcing identity norms. While Flanagan (2009) focuses on artistic experiments and performances in her understanding of ‘critical play’, we suggest that video games can also been seen as politico-aesthetic technologies because they animate fantastical futures that require the player to make, and reflect upon, profound ethical decisions. Numerous scholars have gone before us in taking seriously the place of popular culture in the remaking of our geographies (e.g. Aitken and Zonn 1994; Kneale and Kitchin 2002; Sharp 1993; Dodds 1996; Dittmer 2010; Dittmer and Gray 2010), but video games still lag behind (c.f. Shaw and Warf, 2009). For us, this tendency reflects a more general response to them as imaginary play spaces that are separate from everyday life and ‘real’ Forthcoming in Social and Cultural Geography 4 politics. It is this disconnect between abstraction and lived experience that we wish to complicate by defining play as an event of what Brian Massumi (2011) calls lived abstraction - an ‘occurrent practice’ that undoes entrenched dualities between representation and experience. In short, we wish to short-circuit the barriers that prevent the aesthetic resonating with the political. Our particular focus in this paper are the ways in which video games create and experiment with future geographies, with the political located precisely in ‘the indeterminate but relationally potentialized fringes of existing situations, beyond the limits of current framings or regulatory principles’ (Massumi 2011: 53). And it is here we agree with Andy Merrifield’s (2009: 386) reflection that ‘Politics more than anything else needs the magical touch of dream and desire, needs the shock of the poetic; left to professional career politicians, the political is always destined to feel stifled and lifeless and apolitical; it's always destined to induce a jetlagged, deadening insomnia...’ In order to illuminate the political, future-oriented aesthetics of video games, we develop and extend the concept of 'social irrealism'. Social irrealism is a form of storytelling where questions over the future of humanity and its existential place in the world are told through imaginary landscapes and alien tropes that refract and reshape the real. While it is true that video games usually produce fictional spaces, they do not produce entirely unreal spaces. Instead, they are much more like virtual laboratories for probing, playing, and experimenting with reality. In order to demonstrate how video games mobilize this 'shock of the poetic' and create socially irreal spaces, we engage with some of the most successful games series in recent memory: Deus Ex, Mass Effect and Bioshock. The use of allegory is by no means new of course, but what is unique to video games is the level of interactivity they afford the player—by their very nature they are designed to create ‘complex, implicit, contingent conditions wherein the texture of engaged human experience can happen’