#### The feigned distancing of capitalist governments from the political systems they create and use military power to enforce entrenches the working class with Cruel Optismism

Berlant, Lauren. 2006. “Cruel Optimism”

When we talk about an object of desire, we are really talking about a cluster of promises we want someone or something to make to us and make possible for us. This cluster of promises could be embedded in a person, a thing, an institution, a text, a norm, a bunch of cells, smells, a good idea—whatever To phrase “the object of desire” as a cluster of promises is to allow us to encounter what is incoherent or enigmatic in our attachments, not as confirmation of our irrationality, but as an explanation for our sense of our endurance in the object, insofar as proximity to the object means proximity to the cluster of things that the object promises, some of which may be clear to us while others not so much. In other words, all attachments are optimistic. That does not mean that they all feel optimistic: one might dread, for example, returning to a scene of hunger or longing or the slapstick reiteration of a lover or parent’s typical misrecognition. But the surrender to the return to the scene where the object hovers in its potentialities is the operation of optimism as an affective form (see Ghent).

#### NASA’s space colonization programs also fuel space militarization

Anderson 16 (Jake, “NASA’s Propaganda Campaign Wants You to Embrace the Militarization of Space” 4/11/16 http://theantimedia.org/nasa-propaganda-militarization-space/”)///CW

([ANTIMEDIA](http://theantimedia.org/)) We’ve seen quite a bit of NASA in the news recently. The [latest photos of Pluto](https://twitter.com/NASASolarSystem/status/718167843007627265/photo/1?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) rattled up considerable excitement — and why not? The celestial body was dead not too long ago, heartlessly stripped of its 9th planet status. Now it’s back with a vengeance. NASA made headlines again on Friday, when it announced a watershed [mission to Europa](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/missions/europa-mission/), the icy moon of Jupiter that many scientists believe could harbor life in the oceans under its glacial surface. Last year, coinciding with the cinematically poignant, if not propagandistic film, The Martian, NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) unveiled its “[Visions of the Future](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/visions-of-the-future/)” project, a set of 14 posters meant to instill a new generation of Americans with a renewed interest in traveling to other planets and moons in the solar system and beyond. The posters, made by the design company Invisible Creature, are fascinating. They depict a future in which advanced space travel has allowed humans to freely hop around the solar system; it is intrasolar space tourism of the highest order. The project saw NASA officials, scientists, engineers, public relations experts, and artists collaborating to imagine what the future of humanity could entail. One particularly beautiful poster features humans in advanced hot air balloons touring Jupiter. The description reads: “The Jovian cloudscape boasts the most spectacular light show in the solar system, with northern and southern lights to dazzle even the most jaded space traveler. Jupiter’s auroras are hundreds of times more powerful than Earth’s, and they form a glowing ring around each pole that’s bigger than our home planet.” <="" ins="" data-adsbygoogle-status="done" style="margin: 0px 0px 0px -40px; padding: 0px; border: 0px; outline: 0px; font-size: 16px; vertical-align: baseline; text-decoration: none; width: 320px; height: 100px; display: block; text-align: center; background: transparent;"> [Other posters](http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/visions-of-the-future/) include an illustrative future history of Mars exploration; a journey through the clouds of Venus; a boat ride on Titan’s rivers and lakes of liquid ethane and methane; an undersea exhibit of the life forms under the ice of Europa; exoplanets with red vegetation; a dark orphan planet flying through the galaxy without a sun (“where the nightlife never ends”), and many more. The posters are undeniably inspired and sure to delight space buffs, science fiction fans, and children alike. More than a few people have noticed the strangely propagandistic feel of the posters. One writer even compared them aesthetically to the [Atomic Age posters](http://dangerousminds.net/comments/wish_you_were_vaporized) from the 20th century. [One of the artists](http://mashable.com/2016/02/11/nasa-jpl-visions-of-the-future/#zsBqdbODh8q3) responsible for creating the posters admitted the influence. “We were inspired by vintage travel posters, WPA-type posters from the 1930s and then all the way up to mid-century modern— 1940s, 1950s, 1960s,” he said. There is certainly no denying that while these posters have an altruistic goal of getting a new generation interested in space travel, they are also greasing the wheels for new NASA budget proposals and the new age of the [space-industrial complex](http://www.spaceref.com/news/viewnews.html?id=1342). The agency, which many mistakenly believe has been on essential furlough since the moon landings, has actually been prolific in recent years, with unmanned missions to Jupiter, Pluto, and Mars. Currently, [NASA is running](http://mentalfloss.com/article/60532/15-ongoing-space-missions-you-should-know-about) very exciting, groundbreaking projects, including [JUNO](https://www.missionjuno.swri.edu/), [DAWN](http://dawn.jpl.nasa.gov/), and the New Horizons [mission to Pluto](https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/newhorizons/main/index.html), which garnered over [10 million visits](http://gizmodo.com/how-nasa-won-the-internet-1719318683) to the NASA government homepage. That said, there have been considerable budget cuts in the last decades, with [more to come](http://www.universetoday.com/127309/nasa-2017-budget/). Since 1966, [NASA’s budget](http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2010/feb/01/nasa-budgets-us-spending-space-travel) has fallen from 4.41 percent of the federal budget to just 0.5 percent. Despite the recent fantastic recent discoveries and NASA’s robust social media presence, there has been the perception that the agency’s missions have become “boring.” Rocket launches barely even make the news these days, and, until this decade, the only space endeavors that truly got people talking were images from Mars and speculation about life there. Many believed space travel was dead. That is the perception NASA wants to overcome. Movies like The Martian —which [NASA influenced heavily](http://www.popsci.com/why-nasa-helped-ridley-scott-create-martian-film-and-what-means-future-sci-fi-space-movies) — and the “Visions of the Future” space tourism posters can be seen as ambitious moves to get the public excited about space exploration again. An excited public is a powerful leveraging tool for requesting more funds. Some have noted that efforts by NASA to infiltrate popular culture are nothing new. The agency launched an entire series of novels called “[NASA-Inspired Works of Fiction](https://www.nasa.gov/press/goddard/2014/february/nasa-hosts-launch-of-nasa-inspired-book-series/#.VwqiR5NVhHw),” for which they conscripted science fiction authors to produce novels amenable to the new eclectic age of federally sponsored space travel. One of these novels, William Forstchen’s 2014 science fiction novel, “Pillar to the Sky,” for example, argues that bureaucratic slashes to the NASA budget are one of the biggest threats to humanity. For the record, this is a textbook example of a [psychological operation (psyop)](https://flowofwisdom.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/mindwar-mindwar_co_authored_by_michael-aquino.pdf) — or a planned operation by the government meant to manipulate public opinion. Specifically, this would be classified as a “white psyop,” which is an official statement or act associated with a government source. To put it bluntly, it’s the nicest form of propaganda, as contrasted with grey and black psyops, which use varying gradations of subterfuge and covert operations. There are [thousands of psyops](http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2014-06-16/psyops-todays-wars-are-won-military-messages) being conducted around the world, some acknowledged, some top secret with classified government budgets. The release of both the “Visions of the Future” series and The Martiancoincided with NASA’s request of [$19 billion](http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2016-02/10/nasa-posters-2017-budget?utm_content=bufferbe38e&amp;utm_medium=social&amp;utm_source=twitter.com&amp;utm_campaign=buffer) to fund a manned mission to Mars. The request comes at a time when NASA is increasingly partnering with private companies to bolster the United States space apparatus. Earlier this year, the [agency issued massive contracts](https://www.rt.com/usa/329013-nasa-spacex-orbital-supplies-iss/) to three companies— SpaceX, Orbital ATK, and Sierra Nevada Corporation — that will complete six cargo resupply missions for International Space Station (ISS) by 2024. SpaceX, of course, is run by Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk, who has openly said he wants the company to help enable the [colonization of Mars](http://arstechnica.com/science/2016/01/elon-musk-to-unveil-mars-plans-this-year-wants-to-go-to-space-by-2020/). Last year, the company released its own [Mars propaganda](http://gizmodo.com/spacex-just-dropped-these-amazing-retro-mars-travel-pos-1704855680) posters. Over the weekend, the company made headlines by successfully launching and delivering the [first inflatable room](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/spacex-delivers-world-s-1st-inflatable-room-astronauts-n553711) for astronauts. [Orbital ATK](http://www.parabolicarc.com/2016/03/19/orbital-atk-expands-operations-arizona/) is an American aerospace manufacturer and defense industry company that produces tactical missiles, defense electronics, and medium and large-caliber ammunition. Sierra Nevada Corporation is an electronic systems provider and systems integrator specializing in microsatellites, telemedicine, and commercial orbital transportation services. In addition to the NASA contract, the United States Army contracted them to manufacture Mobile Tower Systems (MOTS) and help fund Gorgon Stare, a remotely controlled, aircraft-based Wide-Area Persistent Surveillance (WAPS) system. [Since 2006](http://www.militaryindustrialcomplex.com/totals.asp?thisContractor=Sierra%20Nevada%20Corporation), the United States military has awarded the company 65 contracts, totaling nearly $3 trillion. That NASA’s functions are interwoven with the military-industrial complex should come as no surprise. Since its inception, the Pentagon has controlled the agency through an [oversight committee](http://www.nasa.gov/50th/50th_magazine/coldWarCoOp.html), with the open goal of utilizing the space between Earth and the moon for [strategic military operations](http://www.rense.com/general74/path.htm). Space is widely considered to be the next frontier of warfare. The militarization of space in the coming decades will see tactical satellites capable of [launching nukes](http://motherboard.vice.com/read/russia-is-concerned-about-americas-far-off-space-weapons), disarming weapons, and collecting vast amounts of surveillance data. [Noam Chomsky](http://motherboard.vice.com/read/russia-is-concerned-about-americas-far-off-space-weapons) calls it one of the biggest threats facing humanity. How does this connect back to the “Visions of the Future” posters? To be fair, there’s absolutely nothing wrong with getting excited about space. We live in an incomprehensibly large universe with billions of galaxies, each one containing billions, and even trillions of stars. Our species has finally stepped off its front porch and is looking to venture out into the cosmos. While some might question whether the human species is safe — both to ourselves and others — leaving its home, we must colonize other planets in order to ensure the long-term survival of the species. We’re set to render our home planet uninhabitable, but that doesn’t mean splinter groups of humans might not someday live sustainably on a colony world (think big, folks!). Though we are likely centuries away from traveling to the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, there is a very real chance we will explore other planets in the solar system in the coming decades. As we rekindle our excitement about space, let’s keep in mind that NASA’s space technology will also allow us to wage wars and engage in planetary surveillance. With great promise comes great peril. As with artificial intelligence, biotechnology and countless other burgeoning fields with revolutionary potential, we must proceed with [great caution](http://motherboard.vice.com/read/russia-is-concerned-about-americas-far-off-space-weapons). With space, especially, we must carefully consider the people to whom we’ve entrusted our explorations — or the human race could end up like George Clooney’s character in Gravity, metaphorically speaking.

#### Governmental colonization of space causes resource wars and space weapons development

Gagnon 09 [Bruce K. Gagnon is the coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space and a contributor to Foreign Policy In Focus, “Arms Race in Space”, March 19, http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/5971]///CW

NASA was created as a civilian agency with a mission to do peaceful space exploration. But the growing influence of the military industrial complex has rubbed out the line between civilian and military programs.  When George W. Bush appointed former Secretary of the Navy Sean O'Keefe to head NASA in late 2001, the new space agency director announced that all NASA missions in the future would be "dual use." This meant that every NASA space launch would be both military and civilian at the same time. The military would ride the NASA Trojan horse and accelerate space weapons development without the public's knowledge. NASA would expand space nuclear power systems to help create new designs for weapons propulsion. Permanent, nuclear-powered bases on the moon and Mars would give the United States a leg up in the race for control of those planetary bodies. The international competition for resource extraction in space (helium-3 on the moon) is now full on.  NASA's job is to do the research and development, and then be ready to turn everything over to private corporate interests once the technology has been sorted out. The taxpayers will fund the technology investment program. The military will create the space weapons systems to ensure free corporate access to the space highways of the future. The aerospace industry is already making record profits from the ever-escalating cost of space technology systems. Virtually every system now under development is well over budget. Just one illustration is NASA's International Space Station. Originally slated to cost the taxpayers $10 billion, the project has now grown to $100 billion and is not yet finished.

#### Rather than functioning as a leash on rampant capitalistic expansion in space, governmental regulation fuels the neoliberal empire

Holen, Thomas B, and Shammas, Victor L. One giant leap for capitalistkind: private enterprise in outer space.Palgrave Communications.1/29/19. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-019-0218-9> .DA=1/25/22.-SVJK)

But the entrepreneurial libertarianism of capitalistkind is undermined by the reliance of the entire NewSpace complex on extensive support from the state, ‘a public-private financing model underpinning long-shot start-ups' that in the case of Musk’s three main companies (SpaceX, SolarCity Corp., and Tesla) has been underpinned by $4.9 billion dollars in government subsidies (Hirsch, 2015). In the nascent field of space tourism, Cohen (2017) argues that what began as an almost entirely private venture quickly ground to a halt in the face of insurmountable technical and financial obstacles, only solved by piggybacking on large state-run projects, such as selling trips to the International Space Station, against the objections of NASA scientists. The business model of NewSpace depends on the taxpayer’s dollar while making pretensions to individual selfreliance. The vast majority of present-day clients of private aerospace corporations are government clients, usually military in origin. Furthermore, the bulk of rocket launches in the United States take place on government property, usually operated by the US Air Force or NASA.13 This inward tension between state dependency and capitalist autonomy is itself a product of neoliberalism’s contradictory demand for a minimal, “slim” state, while simultaneously (and in fact) relying on a state reengineered and retooled for the purposes of capital accumulation (Wacquant, 2012). As Lazzarato writes, ‘To be able to be “laissez-faire”, it is necessary to intervene a great deal' (2017, p. 7). Space libertarianism is libertarian in name only: behind every NewSpace venture looms a thick web of government spending programs, regulatory agencies, public infrastructure, and universities bolstered by research grants from the state. SpaceX would not exist were it not for state-sponsored contracts of satellite launches. Similarly, in 2018, the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)—the famed origin of the World Wide Web—announced that it would launch a ‘responsive launch competition', meaning essentially the reuse of launch vehicles, representing an attempt by the state to ‘harness growing commercial capabilities' and place them in the service of the state’s interest in ensuring ‘national security' (Foust, 2018b). his libertarianism has been steadily growing in the nexus between Silicon Valley, Stanford University, Wall Street, and the Washington political establishment, which tend to place a high value on Randian ‘objectivism' and participate in a long American intellectual heritage of individualistic ‘bootstrapping' and (allegedly) gritty self-reliance. But as Nelson and Block (2018, p. 189–197) recognize, one of the central symbolic operations of capitalistkind resides in concealing its reliance on the state by mobilizing the charm of its entrepreneurial constituents and the spectacle of space. There is a case to be made for the idea that SpaceX and its ilk resemble semi-private corporations like the British East India Company. The latter, “incorporated by royal charter from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 to trade in silk and spices, and other profitable Indian commodities,” recruited soldiers and built a ‘commercial business [that] quickly became a business of conquest' (Tharoor, 2017). SpaceX, too, is increasingly imbricated with an attempt on the part of a particular state, the United States, to colonize and appropriate resources derived from a particular area, that of outer space; it, too, depends on the infrastructure, contracts, and regulatory environment that thus far only a state seems able to provide. Its private character, like that of the East India Company, is troubled by being deeply embedded in the state. As one commentator has observed of SpaceX, ‘If there’s a consistent charge against Elon Musk and his high-flying companies…it’s that they’re not really examples of independent, innovative market capitalism. Rather, they’re government contractors, dependent on taxpayer money to stay afloat' (cit. Nelson and Block, 2018, p. 189). Perhaps this should not come as a surprise. As Bourdieu (2005, p. 12) observed, ‘The economic field is, more than any other, inhabited by the state, which contributes at every moment to its existence and persistence, and also to the structure of the relations of force that characterize it'. The state lays out the preconditions for market exchanges. Under neoliberalism, the state is the preeminent facilitator of markets. The neoliberal state is not so much a Minimalstaat, night watchman state, or slim state as it is the prima causa of market society (see, e.g., Wacquant, 2012). Simiarly, in the political theory of Deleuze and Guattari, any economic development presupposes the political differentiation caused by the state (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004a, p. 237–238). Even in the global environment of contemporary capitalism, the market cannot operate without the state becoming integrated with capitalism itself, as ‘it is the modern state that gives capitalism its models of realization' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004b, p. 480). For capitalism to survive in outer space, the state must create a regulatory environment, subsidize infrastructure, and hand down contracts – in short, assemble outer space as a domain made accessible in legal, technical, and economic ways.

#### Cruel optimism in capitalistic institutions masks their flaws and ensures that meaningful revolution will never happen. Reject discourse that establishes that optimism

Berlant, Lauren. 2006. “Cruel Optimism”

“Cruel optimism” names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility. What is cruel about these attachments, and not merely inconvenient or tragic, is that the subjects who have x in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the content of the attachment, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject’s sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world. This phrase points to a condition different than that of melancholia, which is enacted in the subject’s desire to temporize an experience of the loss of an object/scene with which she has identified her ego continuity. Cruel optimism is the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object in advance of its loss. One might point out that all objects/scenes of desire are problematic, in that investments in them and projections onto them are less about them than about the cluster of desires and affects we manage to keep magnetized to them. I have indeed wondered whether all optimism is cruel, because the experience of loss of the conditions of its reproduction can be so breathtakingly bad. But some scenes of optimism are crueler than others: where cruel optimism operates, the very vitalizing or animating potency of an object/scene of desire contributes to the attrition of the very thriving that is supposed to be made possible in the work of attachment in the first place. This might point to something as banal as a scouring love, but it also opens out to obsessive appetites, patriotism, a career, all kinds of things. One makes affective bargains about the costliness of one’s attachments, usually unconscious ones, most of which keep one in proximity to the scene of desire/attrition.

#### Alternative text: Reject the affirmative as a means of refusing complicity with capitalism.

#### Rejecting capitalism is key to opening up new alternatives. Only complete refusal, not piecemeal reform, can prevent otherwise inevitable slavery and extinction.

**Herod, 04** (James, <http://site.www.umb.edu/faculty/salzman_g/Strate/GetFre/4thEd/4-index.htm>, Getting Free, 4th Edition

A sketch of an association of democratic, autonomous neighborhoods and how to create it, Fourth Edition, January 2004

It is time to try to describe, at first abstractly and later concretely, a strategy for destroying capitalism. This strategy, at its most basic, calls for pulling time, energy, and resources out of capitalist civilization and putting them into building a new civilization. The image then is one of emptying out capitalist structures, hollowing them out, by draining wealth, power, and meaning out of them until there is nothing left but shells. This is definitely an aggressive strategy. It requires great militancy, and constitutes an attack on the existing order. The strategy clearly recognizes that capitalism is the enemy and must be destroyed, but it is not a frontal attack aimed at overthrowing the system, but an inside attack aimed at gutting it, while simultaneously replacing it with something better, something we want. Thus capitalist structures(corporations, governments, banks, schools, etc.) are not seized so much as simply abandoned. Capitalist relations are not fought so much as they are simply rejected. We stop participating in activities that support (finance, condone) the capitalist world and start participating in activities that build a new world while simultaneously undermining the old. We create a new pattern of social relations alongside capitalist relations and then we continually build and strengthen our new pattern while doing every thing we can to weaken capitalist relations. In this way our new democratic, non-hierarchical, non-commodified relations can eventually overwhelm the capitalist relations and force them out of existence. This is how it has to be done. This is a plausible, realistic strategy. To think that we could create a whole new world of decent social arrangements overnight, in the midst of a crisis, during a so-called revolution, or during the collapse of capitalism, is foolhardy. Our new social world must grow within the old, and in opposition to it, until it is strong enough to dismantle and abolish capitalist relations. Such a revolution will never happen automatically, blindly, determinably, because of the inexorable, materialist laws of history. It will happen, and only happen, because we want it to, and because we know what we’re doing and know how we want to live, and know what obstacles have to be overcome before we can live that way, and know how to distinguish between our social patterns and theirs. But we must not think that the capitalist world can simply be ignored, in a live and let live attitude, while we try to build new lives elsewhere. (There *is* no elsewhere.) There is at least one thing, wage-slavery, that we can’t simply stop participating in (but even here there are ways we can chip away at it). Capitalism must be explicitly refused and replaced by something else. This constitutes War, but it is not a war in the traditional sense of armies and tanks, but a war fought on a daily basis, on the level of everyday life, by millions of people. It is a war nevertheless because the accumulators of capital will use coercion, brutality, and murder, as they have always done in the past, to try to block any rejection of the system. They have always had to force compliance; they will not hesitate to continue doing so. Nevertheless, there are many concrete ways that individuals, groups, and neighborhoods can gut capitalism, which I will enumerate shortly. We must always keep in mind how we became slaves; then we can see more clearly how we can cease being slaves. We were forced into wage-slavery because the ruling class slowly, systematically, and brutally destroyed our ability to live autonomously. By driving us off the land, changing the property laws, destroying community rights, destroying our tools, imposing taxes, destroying our local markets, and so forth, we were forced onto the labor market in order to survive, our only remaining option being to sell, for a wage, our ability to work. It’s quite clear then how we can overthrow slavery. We must reverse this process. We must begin to reacquire the ability to live without working for a wage or buying the products made by wage-slaves (that is, we must get free from the labor market and the way of living based on it), and embed ourselves instead in cooperative labor and cooperatively produced goods. Another clarification is needed. This strategy does not call for reforming capitalism, for changing capitalism into something else. It calls for replacing capitalism, totally, with a new civilization. This is an important distinction, because capitalism has proved impervious to reforms, as a system. We can sometimes in some places win certain concessions from it (usually only temporary ones) and win some (usually short-lived) improvements in our lives as its victims, but we cannot reform it piecemeal, as a system. Thus our strategy of gutting and eventually destroying capitalism requires at a minimum a totalizing image, an awareness that we are attacking an entire way of life and replacing it with another, and not merely reforming one way of life into something else. Many people may not be accustomed to thinking about entire systems and social orders, but everyone knows what a lifestyle is, or a way of life, and that is the way we should approach it. The thing is this: in order for capitalism to be destroyed millions and millions of people must be dissatisfied with their way of life. They must want something else and see certain existing things as obstacles to getting what they want. It is not useful to think of this as a new ideology. It is not merely a belief-system that is needed, like a religion, or like Marxism, or Anarchism. Rather it is a new prevailing vision, a dominant desire, an overriding need. What must exist is a pressing desire to live a certain way, and not to live another way. If this pressing desire were a desire to live free, to be autonomous, to live in democratically controlled communities, to participate in the self-regulating activities of a mature people, then capitalism could be destroyed. Otherwise we are doomed to perpetual slavery and possibly even to extinction.