## Frontier Mentality AC

### For The Belt!

#### What is Outer Space? Advocates of private appropriation of space see it as a “Frontier” to be conquered and exploited. This “Frontier Mentality” is the dominant narrative in our national history.

Billings, 2006 – National Institute of Aerospace [Linda “ To the Moon, Mars, and Beyond: Culture, Law, and Ethics in Space-Faring Societies” Space Policy November <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/248494321_How_shall_we_live_in_space_Culture_law_>and\_ethics\_in\_spacefaring\_society]

While the social, political, economic and cultural context for the U.S. civil space program has changed radically since the 1960s, the rhetoric, and, arguably, the substance, of space policy making has not. The program and many of its advocates appear to be stuck in the 20th century in some important respects. In the 21st century, politicians and other advocates have been promoting “the Moon- Mars thing” as exploration for the sake of exploring and also as a means of opening up the solar system to private property claims, resource exploitation, and commercial development. In the words of one space advocate, “The solar system is like a giant grocery store. It has everything we could possibly want.” 12 This analogy has its weaknesses: for example, in a grocery store one must, of course, pay for what one wants. And in this “vision,” those with the means to get to the store first get all the goods; those who get there late may get nothing – a system more in the spirit of imperialism than of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. The rhetoric of space advocacy highlighted herein reflects an assumption that the values of materialism, consumerism, and hyper-consumption prevalent today are values worth extending into the solar system. The conception of outer space advanced by these advocates embodies the idea of a solar system (and beyond) of wide-open spaces and limitless resources – a space frontier. This frontier rhetoric, with its images of pioneering, homesteading, claim-staking, and conquest, has been persistent in American history, and the frontier metaphor has been, and still is, a dominant metaphor in rhetoric about space exploration (see, for example, National Commission, 1986). “Space frontier” means different things to different people, and it is worth thinking about the range of meanings invoked by the metaphor in considering what values are, could be, or should be embodied in the human endeavor of space exploration.

#### How we talk about outer space will determine how we treat it, the types of policies we consider, and whether those policies have a chance of succeeding. Discussing space as property to be appropriated reinforces the “Frontier Mentality” and the dominant social order.

Billings, 2007 – Manager at NASA Astrobiology Program [Linda “Overview: Ideology, Advocacy, and Spaceflight—Evolution of a Cultural Narrative” in Societal Impact of Spaceflight By Steven J. Dick https://history.nasa.gov/sp4801-chapter25.pdf]

Spaceflight advocacy can be examined as a cultural ritual, performed by means of communication (rhetoric), for the purpose of maintaining the current social order, with its lopsided distribution of power and resources, and perpetuating the values of those in control of that order (materialism, consumerism, technological progress, private property rights, capitalist democracy). Communication research has shown how public discourses—those cultural narratives or national myths—“often function covertly to legitimate the power of elite social classes.”58 and this review has shown how the rhetoric of space advocacy reflects an assumption that these values are worth extending into the solar system. “Everything now suggests,” Nisbet wrote 25 years ago, “that Western faith in the dogma of progress is waning rapidly.”59 this faith appears to have remained alive and well, however, in the ideology of spaceflight. Christopher Lasch wrote 15 years ago, “almost everyone now agrees that [the idea of] progress—in its utopian form at least,” no longer has the power “to explain events or inspire [people] to constructive action.”60 But in the current cultural environment, perhaps it does—at least among space advocates. Progress is, indeed, modern American dogma and a key element of pro-space dogma. But it does not resonate well—as Pyne and others have noted—in the current postmodern (or even post-postmodern) cultural environment, where public discourse is rife with critiques of science, technology, the aims of the military industrial complex, and the corporate drive for profit. Pyne observed almost 20 years ago that space exploration was “not yet fully in sync” with its cultural environment.61 Modern (seventeenth- to twentieth-century) Western (European-American) exploration functioned as “a means of knowing, of creating commercial empires, of outmaneuvering political economic, religious, and military competitors—it was war, diplomacy, proselytizing, scholarship, and trade by other means.”62 But the postmodern exploration of space is different. outer space is not simply an extension of earth and the era of space exploration is not simply an extension of the modern era of transoceanic and transcontinental exploration. its cultural context is different. The modern phenomenon of spaceflight has outlived the modern era and its purpose is not clear in a postmodern or even post-postmodern world, characterized by uncertainty, subjectivity, deconstruction, and a rejection of so-called master narratives such as the story of frontier conquest. The moral imperative of the myth of pioneering the space frontier could be interpreted as a narrative that is in tune with its postmodern cultural environment in the sense that it conveys the values of the dominant social order—that is, what communication scholar herb Schiller has called “the transnational corporate business order” and its ideology of private property ownership, resource exploitation and profit building.63 Of course, the idea of the human colonization of space is not publicly compelling in the current cultural environment. poet Wendell Berry has addressed this dilemma: the [space colonization] project is an ideal solution to the moral dilemma of all those in this society who cannot face the necessities of meaningful change. it is superbly attuned to the wishes of the corporation executives, bureaucrats, militarists, political operators, and scientific experts who are the chief beneficiaries of the forces that have produced our crisis . . . . if it should be implemented, it will be the rebirth of the idea of progress with all its old lust for unrestrained expansion, its totalitarian concentrations of energy and wealth, its obliviousness to the concerns of character and community, its exclusive reliance on technical and economic criteria, its disinterest in consequence, its contempt for human value, its compulsive salesmanship. the sales pitch for space colonization goes this way, according to Berry: if we will just have the good sense to spend one hundred billion dollars on a space colony, we will thereby produce more money and more jobs, raise the standard of living, help the underdeveloped, increase freedom and opportunity, fulfill the deeper needs of the human spirit etc. etc. . . . anyone who has listened to the arguments of the army corps of engineers, the strip miners, the defense department or any club of boosters will find all this dishearteningly familiar.64 Visions of the human colonization of space present a “moral law of the frontier” that is disturbing, Berry concludes: this law is that “humans are destructive in proportion to their supposition of abundance; if they are faced with an infinite abundance, then they will become infinitely destructive.”65 Berry wrote his essay about the downside of space colonization in the 1970s. But his views are not necessarily out of date. Environmentalists might argue today that the case Berry made against space colonization is even more relevant today than it was in the 1970s. In order to survive as a cultural institution, spaceflight needs an ideology. It needs to have some connection to widely held beliefs. it needs a role in a cultural narrative. But as Pyne has noted, “locating exploration in the human gene or in the human spirit” and not in specific cultures is not viable. Continued reliance on this narrative “only absolves us from making those vital, deliberate choices ”we inevitably have to make—about how we should proceed into space, and what values space exploration should embody. “These choices,” Pyne has said, “are not intuitive.”66 as a cultural institution, space exploration “has to speak to deeper longings and fears and folk identities.” it “is not merely an expression of curiosity but involves the encounter with a world beyond our ken that challenges our sense of who we are. it is a moral act . . . more than adventuring, more than entertainment, more than inquisitiveness.”

#### Changing the discourse and the assumptions behind outer space is necessary to expand beyond the Earth.

Messeri, 2017 - prof of Anthropology at Yale [Lisa March 15, “We Need to Stop Talking About Space as a “Frontier” The language we use matters, especially when it’s deployed in the service of envisioning possible futures” <https://slate.com/technology/2017/03/why-we-need-to-stop-talking-about-space-as-a-frontier.html>]

But the language we use matters, especially when it’s deployed in the service of envisioning possible futures. How we describe space can both expand and constrict our imagination. When we lean too hard on nationalistic language of the frontier and settlement, we imagine a far too narrow set of possibilities for being in space. What if, instead, we were to extend James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis’ “Gaia hypothesis” as a metaphor for NewSpace endeavors. In the early 1970s, they offered a way of thinking about Earth (humans included) as an interdependent, self-correcting ecosystem. So can we apply that same thinking to the stuff beyond Earth? Instead of asteroids lying in wait as resources on the frontier, they can be imagined as part of a delicately balanced ecosystem. Anthropologist Valerie Olson has already been investigating how such “systems thinking” informs much of NASA’s contemporary human space flight research, and perhaps this offers a new, if less romantic, language of exploration. Or what if we undermined the very emptiness that the phrase outer space suggests by referring instead to the cosmos as outer place? We need language that holistically frames our studies and endeavors to live beyond Earth, language that doesn’t have deep roots in nationalistic and imperial thinking. Even as NewSpace declares its mission in service of all humanity, the insistence of understanding space as a frontier might not resonate with all of humanity. As NewSpace companies launch more rockets, raise more money, forge new partnerships, I hope they also start crafting new, varied language that will help us expand our thinking beyond the singular frontier to a plurality of extraterrestrial opportunity.

#### My framework is Astro-environmentalism – viewing outer space as a wilderness to be protected rather than a frontier to be conquered. From an Astro-environmental perspective, you would reject private property in space.

Miller, 2001 – eco critic for the Electronic Green Journal [Ryder EGJ no. 15 “Astroenvironmentalism: The Case for Space Exploration As An Environmental Issue,” <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2d37b8cx>]

Astroenvironmentalism, an argument to apply the values of environmentalism and preservationism to developments in space exploration, militarization and commercialism, is not a new idea. But recent developments in space exploration suggest this perspective is not widely acknowledged enough by those who envision taking steps to enter space. Environmentalists did not take a stand on these issues over the last few years, which was unfortunate because this was a topical time to argue that space should be an environmental issue. Astroenvironmentalism is an addition to present efforts, but also an umbrella term to describe a variety of related concerns held by many players in the environmental arena. Since mankind made such a mess of this planet and is now paying the environmental price for the damage, this topic is of extreme importance because we must avoid making the same mistakes in space as we have on earth. At issue are the environmental consequences of the steps we are about to take in entering space. The adaptation of environmental concerns to developments in the exploration and commercialization of space fit surprisingly easily. Astroenvironmentalism is another re-formulation of the associated environmental concerns involving a space wilderness to protect, rather than a "frontier" to exploit. As I have outlined elsewhere (Miller, 1999), some of the concerns of astroenvironmentalism can include: Keeping the space surrounding the Earth clear of pollution, debris, and garbage. Efforts are necessary so we do not add to the reservoir of human waste and machinery left behind by space explorers. Such debris could cause damage to satellites and the space shuttles. Remembering and teaching the lessons learned from terrestrial conservation and preservation struggles of the past and applying them to the new frontier of space, that is, considering space and the celestial bodies pristine wildernesses that need to be protected rather than frontiers to conquer. Tracking and monitoring the environmental damage caused by the fuels used for space expeditions, that is, making space agencies adhere to the restrictions of environmental impact statements. In particular, it would be worthwhile to reduce the amount of plutonium that is being used in case of a mishap that would result in plutonium entering the atmosphere. Treating the Moon, Mars, Venus, and other planetary bodies as wildernesses that need to be protected, that is, arguing against the idea to "terraform" these celestial bodies. Terraforming introduces atmosphere-creating life into the barren celestial bodies in the effort to make these celestial bodies more amenable to human settlement. Terraforming is presently being explored despite the fact that we have not thoroughly explored these planets for indigenous life. Creating a set of ethical guidelines to protect the life that we encounter elsewhere, that is, study and protect rather than just study. The creation or re-publicizing of ethics applied to these concerns would be welcome. Creating safeguards to insure there is no contamination of celestial bodies, that is, safeguarding against the introduction of non-terrestrial life to and from celestial bodies. Non-indigenous life, whether it be Zebra mussels or microbes, under conditions where there are no controlling factors, can reproduce at exponential rates thereby changing the environment in the process. These changes can harm the organisms that were dependent upon the original environmental conditions. Counteracting the efforts of national and private agencies to terraform other planets. This idea to terraform is not just science fiction, and ecocritics can criticize science fiction writers who want terraforming to occur before a thorough search for life is conducted. This has been evident in Kim Stanley Robinson's award-winning science fiction trilogy Red Mars, Green Mars and Blue Mars, and recent films such as The Ghosts of Mars and Red Planet. Prohibiting national, international, and private agencies from owning property in space, in the interest of avoiding military conflicts. There is a need for more people to be involved in the efforts to see that space does not become another battleground. Creating the legal power to enforce these concerns. This would make more people aware of international space law and the need to enforce it. The United Nations rules on such issues through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

#### The role of the ballot is to critique the historical myths which inform American identity—this allows us to come to grips with colonialism and embrace a more inclusive identity

Trofanenko 2005 Professor of Social Studies at University of Illinois (Brenda, Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois, The Social Studies, Sept/Oct)

The debates about the overwhelming problems, limitations, and disadvantages of social studies education noted in the Fordham report attempt to reconcile and advance the idea of nation through a collective history. Our more pressing role as educators, in light of the Fordham report, is to discuss a more nuanced understanding of the U.S. history. This would advance, as noted in La Pietra Report, an understanding about “the complexity and the contexts of relations and interactions, including the ways in which they are infused with a variety of forms of power that define and result from the interconnections of distinct but related histories” (OAH 2000, 1). Taking the U.S. nation as only one example of social analysis involves recognizing the meanings and conditions out of which nations are formed. There is no one experience of belonging to a nation, no single understanding or enactment of sovereignty, and certainly no one meaning or experience of colonization or being colonized. There is, then, a need for these issues to be realized and to be a part of the questioning occurring within our classrooms. That would allow for the substantial reframing of the basic narrative of U.S. history (OAH 2000, 2). Toward a More Global Sense of the Nation Knowing how history is a site of political struggle, how we engage with social studies education means emphasizing how power, processes, and practices bear tangible effects on forging a national (and common) history by reproducing and vindicating inclusions and exclusions. Such a critique requires questioning how a singular, fixed, and static history celebrates the U.S. nation and its place in the world as that “common base of factual information about the American historical and contemporary experience” (27) argues for in the Fordham report. Our world history courses are central to defining, understanding, and knowing not only other nations but also the position of each nation in relation to the United States. The centrality that the west holds (notably the United States as an imperial power) is ingrained and willful in framing specific representations of the west that normalize the imperial practices that established this nation. The role that the United States holds on the world stage frequently remains unquestioned in social studies classrooms. Certainly, we engage with various images and tropes to continue to advance how the colonialist past continues to remain present in our historical sensibilities. Moreover, the increasing number and choices of archival sources function as a complement to further understanding the nation. If students are left to rely on the variety of historical resources rather than question the use of such resources, then the most likely outcome of their learning will be the reflection on the past with nostalgia that continues to celebrate myths and colonial sensibility. To evaluate the history narrative now is to reconsider what it means and to develop a historical consciousness in our students that goes beyond archival and nostalgic impulses associated with the formation of the nation and U.S. nation building. We need to insist that the nation, and the past that has contributed to its present day understanding, is simultaneously material and symbolic. The nation as advanced in our histories cannot be taken as the foundational grounds. The means by which the nation is fashioned calls for examining the history through which nations are made and unmade. To admit the participatory nature of knowledge and to invite an active and critical engagement with the world so that students can come to question the authority of historical texts will, I hope, result in students’ realizing that the classroom is not solely a place to learn about the nation and being a national, but rather a place to develop a common understanding of how a nation is often formed through sameness. We need to continue to question how a particular national history is necessary as an educational function, but especially how that element has been, and remains, useful at specific times. My hope is to extend the current critique of history within social studies, to move toward understanding why history and nation still needs a place in social studies education. In understanding how the historicity of nation serves as “the ideological alibi of the territorial state” (Appadurai 1996, 159) offers us a starting point. The challenge facing social studies educators is how we can succeed in questioning nation, not by displacing it from center stage but by considering how it is central. That means understanding how powerfully engrained the history of a nation is within education and how a significant amount of learning is centered around the nation and its history. History is a forum for assessing and understanding the study of change over time, which shapes the possibilities of knowledge itself. We need to reconsider the mechanisms used in our own teaching, which need to be more than considering history as a nostalgic reminiscence of the time when the nation was formed. We need to be questioning the contexts for learning that can no longer be normalized through history’s constituted purpose. The changing political and social contexts of public history have brought new opportunities for educators to work through the tensions facing social studies education and its educational value to teachers and students. Increasing concerns with issues of racism, equality, and the plurality of identities and histories mean that there is no unified knowledge as the result of history, only contested subjects whose multilayered and often contradictory voices and experiences intermingle with partial histories that are presented as unified. This does not represent a problem, but rather an opportunity for genuine productive study, discussion, and learning.

#### Contention One – You must Reject the Frontier Mentality in Space

#### The Frontier Mentality extends structural violence and inequality from Earth into space.

Launius, 2012 - former chief historian at NASA [Roger D, July 30 “The Declining Significance of the Frontier in Space History?” <https://launiusr.wordpress.com/2012/07/30/the-declining-significance-of-the-frontier-in-space-history/>]

The image of the frontier, however, has been a less and less acceptable and effective metaphor as the twentieth century became the twenty-first century. Progressives have come to view the space program from a quite different perspective. To the extent that space represents a new frontier, it conjures up images of commercial exploitation and the subjugation of oppressed peoples. Implemented through a large aerospace industry, in their view, it appears to create the sort of governmental-corporate complexes of which liberals are increasingly wary. Despite the promise that the Space Shuttle, like jet aircraft, would make space flight accessible to the “common man,” space travel remains the province of a favored few, perpetuating inequalities rather than leveling differences. They also assert that space exploration has also remained largely a male frontier, with room for few minorities. In the eyes of progressives, space perpetuates the inequities that they have increasingly sought to abolish on Earth. As a consequence, it is not viewed favorably by those caught up in what political scientist Aaron Wildavsky has characterized as “the rise of radical egalitarianism.” The advent of this liberal philosophy coincides with the shift in ideological positions on the U.S. space program in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

#### The Frontier Mentality is a form of Terror Management. Our anxiety forces us to overlook injustice and death on Earth in favor of the escapism of making it rich in space.

Jackson, 2021 - Professor of Sustainable Development at University of Surrey [Tim “Billionaire space race: the ultimate symbol of capitalism’s flawed obsession with growth” July 20, The Conversation https://theconversation.com/billionaire-space-race-the-ultimate-symbol-of-capitalisms-flawed-obsession-with-growth-164511]

So yes. I changed my mind. The next day I walked into the Greenpeace office in London and asked what I could do to help. They set me working on the economics of renewable energy I became, accidentally, an economist. (Economics needs more accidental economists.) And that’s when it began to dawn on me that learning how to live well on this fragile planet is far more important than dreaming about the next one. Mine is bigger than yours Not so the space race billionaires. A handful of unbelievably powerful men, whose wealth has exploded massively throughout the pandemic, are now busy trying to persuade us that the future lies not here on Earth but out there among the stars. Tesla founder and serial entrepreneur, Elon Musk is one of these new rocket men. “Those who attack space,” he tweeted recently, “maybe don’t realise that space represents hope for so many people”. That may be true of course in a world where huge inequalities of wealth and privilege strip hope from the lives of billions of people. But, as the spouse of a Nasa flight controller pointed out, it obscures the extraordinary demands of escaping from Mother Earth, in terms of energy materials, people and time. Undeterred, the rocket men gaze starward. If resources are the problem, then space must be the answer. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is pretty explicit about his own expansionary vision. “We can have a trillion humans in the solar system,” he once declared. “Which means we’d have a thousand Mozarts and a thousand Einsteins. This would be an incredible civilisation.” Bezos and Musk have spent their lockdown contesting the top two places on the Forbes rich list. They’ve also been playing “mine is bigger than yours” in their own private space race for a couple of decades now. Bezos’s personal wealth almost doubled during the course of a pandemic that destroyed the lives and livelihoods of millions. He’s now stepping down to spend more time on Blue Origin, the company he hopes will deliver vast human colonies across the solar system. The declared aim of Musk’s rival company, SpaceX, is “to make humanity multiplanetary”. Just like Kim Stanley Robinson’s science fiction trilogy back in the 1990s, Musk aims to establish a permanent human colony on Mars. To get there, he reasons, we need very big rockets – or, in the original terminology of SpaceX, Big Fucking Rockets (BFRs) – eventually capable of transporting scores of people and hundreds of tonnes of equipment millions of miles across the solar system. The BFRs have now given way to a series of (more sedately named) Starships. And to prove his green credentials Musk desperately wants these starships to be reusable. So much so that SpaceX conspired to blow up four consecutive Starship prototypes in quick succession during the first four months of 2021 trying unsuccessfully to re-land them. Move fast and break things is the Silicon Valley motto of course. But eventually you’ve got to bring the goods home. Starship SN15 finally achieved that on May 5 – three weeks after SpaceX had landed a massive US$2.9 billion contract from Nasa, nudging Blue Origin into the space race shadows. Not wanting to be outdone, Bezos came up with what he must have hoped was the ultimate comeback. When Blue Origin’s New Shepard rocket – which is also reusable – made its first manned space flight on July 20, he and his brother Mark would be two of the first few passengers on board. Wow, Jeff! Kudos man! Now you really show us your cojones! Nobody likes coming second. Least of all the most powerful people on the planet. But sometimes you get no choice. Out of the blue, without so much as a by-your-leave, Virgin boss, Richard Branson swooped in to steal everyone’s thunder. On July 11, nine days before Bezos’s big day, Branson became the first ever billionaire to launch himself into space. And for a cool US$250,000, he promised us, you too can be one of Virgin Galactic’s 600 or so breathless customers, waiting to enjoy three or four weightless minutes gazing back in rapture at the planet you’ve left behind. Apparently, Musk has already signed up. Bezos doesn’t need to. He’s made his own virgin space flight now. Prosperity as health The space rhetoric of the super-rich betrays a mentality that may once have served humanity well. Some would say it’s a quintessential feature of capitalism. Innovation upon innovation. A driving ambition to expand and explore. A primal urge to escape our origins and reach for the next horizon. Space travel is a natural extension of our obsession with economic growth. It’s the crowning jewel of capitalism. Further and faster is its frontier creed. I’ve spent much of my professional life as a critic of that creed, not just for environmental reasons but on social grounds as well. The seven years I spent as economics commissioner on the UK’s Sustainable Development Commission and my subsequent research at the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity revealed something fundamental about our aspirations for the good life. Something that has been underlined by the experience of the pandemic. Prosperity is as much about health as it is about wealth. Ask people what matters most in their lives and the chances are that this will come out somewhere near the top of the list. Health for themselves. Health for their friends and their families. Health too – sometimes – for the fragile planet on which we live and on whose health we ourselves depend. There’s something fascinating in this idea. Because it confronts the obsession with growth head on. As Aristotle pointed out in Nicomachean Ethics (a book named after his physician father), the good life is not a relentless search for more, but a continual process of finding a “virtuous” balance between too little and too much. Population health provides an obvious example of this idea. Too little food and we’re struggling with diseases of malnutrition. Too much and we’re tipped into the “diseases of affluence” that now kill more people than under-nutrition does. Good health depends on us finding and nurturing this balance. This task is always tricky of course, even at the individual level. Just think about the challenge of keeping your exercise, your diet and your appetites in line with the outcome of a healthy body weight. But as I’ve argued, living inside a system that has its sights continually focused on more makes the task near impossible. Obesity has tripled since 1975. Almost two-fifths of adults over 18 are overweight. Capitalism not only fails to recognise the point where balance lies. It has absolutely no idea how to stop when it gets there. You’d think our brush with mortality through the pandemic would have brought some of this home to us. You’d think it would give us pause for thought about what really matters to us: the kind of world we want for our children; the kind of society we want to live in. And for many people it has. In a survey carried out during lockdown in the UK, 85% of respondents found something in their changed conditions they felt worth keeping and fewer than 10% wanted a complete return to normal. When life and health are at stake, the ungodly scramble for wealth and status feels less and less attractive. Even the lure of technology pales. Family, conviviality and a sense of purpose come to the fore. These are the things that many people found they lacked most throughout the pandemic. But their importance in our lives was not a COVID accident: they are the most fundamental elements of a sustainable prosperity. The denial of death Something even more surprising has emerged during my three decades of research. Behind consumer capitalism, behind the frontier mentality, beyond the urge to expand forever lies a deep-seated and pervasive anxiety. What does day two look like, Bezos once asked a crowd of the faithful, referring to his famous maxim about the need to innovate. “Day two is stasis, followed by irrelevance, followed by excruciatingly painful decline, followed by death,” he said. “And that. Is why. It is always. Day one!” His audience loved it. Musk plays out his own inner demons just as disarmingly. “I’m not trying to be anyone’s saviour,” he once told TED’s head curator, Chris Anderton. “I’m just trying to think about the future – and not be sad.” Again, the applause was deafening. A well-trained therapist could have a field day with all of this. Take that miraculous day a few weeks after the Perseverance rover started sending home the most amazing selfies in the universe, when the Ingenuity helicopter made its virgin flight in the wafer thin atmosphere of Mars. It was the kind of outcome that could have intelligence agencies drooling over far less benign uses of the technology. But there was also something pretty existential going on. The faint whispering of the Martian wind, relayed faithfully across the solar system, doesn’t just confirm the possibilities for aerial flight on an alien planet. It’s grist to the mill of an essential belief that human beings are endlessly creative and fiendishly clever. Our visceral response to these momentary triumphs speaks to a branch of psychology called terror management theory drawn from the work of cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker. It was explored in particular in his astonishing 1973 book The Denial of Death. In it, Becker argues that modern society has lost its way, precisely because we’ve become terrified of confronting the inevitability of our own demise. Terror management theory tells us that, when mortality becomes “salient”, instead of addressing the underlying fear, we turn for comfort to the things which make us feel good. Capitalism itself is a massive comfort blanket, designed to help us never confront the mortality that awaits us all. So too are the dreams of the rocket men. Beyond lockdown When Sputnik kickstarted the first “space race” six decades ago, a US newspaper headline called it “one step toward [our] escape from imprisonment to the Earth”. Arendt read those words with astonishment. She saw there a deep-seated “rebellion against human existence”. It isn’t just the pandemic that locks us down, the implication is. It’s the entire human condition. The anxiety we feel is nothing new. The choice between confronting our fears and running away from them has always been a profound one. It’s exactly the choice we’re facing now. As vaccine roll-out brings a glimmer of light at the end of COVID-19, the temptation to rush into wild escapism is massive. But for all its glamour, the “final frontier” is at best an amusement and at worst a fatal distraction from the urgent task of rebuilding a society ravaged by social injustice, climate change and a loss of faith in the future. With most of us still reeling from what the World Health Organisation has called a shadow pandemic in mental health, any kind of escape plan at all looks remarkably like paradise. And emigrating to Mars is one hell of an escape plan.

#### How we treat the astro-environment demonstrates how we will behave toward Earth’s environment.

Miller, 2001 – eco critic for the Electronic Green Journal [Ryder EGJ no. 15 “Astroenvironmentalism: The Case for Space Exploration As An Environmental Issue,” <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2d37b8cx>]

Over the years there have been many people who have been concerned with this issue, but they would not necessarily call themselves astroenvironmentalists. I put forth astronenvironmentalism as an argument that space should be considered an environmental issue and the term can function as an umbrella term for the related concerns. Astroenvironmentalism seems to fill a void, because there are no widely known organizations that focus on this issue. There is no widely known Mars First or Venus First organization arguing against terraforming. There is no Greenspace or Spacepeace. Most environmental groups are focused on more immediate issues and are more concerned with immediate and down-toEarth issues. Leopold's Land Ethic, which focused on protecting life, is not easily applicable to the barren territories of space. But the argument of protecting space from exploitation is not solely about protecting rocks; it is also about making a statement about human behavior. If one succeeds in making the argument about protecting celestial bodies, we are also making the argument about protecting habitats here on earth. In Beyond Space Ship Earth: Environmental Ethics and the Solar System, probably the most thorough coverage of the subject, Hargrove (1986) writes that the only reason there are no people on the Moon or Mars is due to reduced NASA spending levels. "The attempts to apply environmental concepts to the Solar System represent a significant challenge for environmental ethics, since so far as we know at present the Solar System, except for Earth, is a collection of nonliving natural objects, the kind of entity that offers the greatest conceptual difficulties for environmental ethics." Hargrove warns, "If serious planning begins without adequate ethical and environmental input, then future NASA and associated industrial/commercial projects in the Solar System may simply produce a new environmental crisis that dwarfs our current one" (pp. x-xi). Hargrove argues that if we do nothing, the dark visions of science fiction could become true.

#### The Frontier Mentality extends militarism by securitizing outer space.

Billings, 2017 – consultant NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office [Linda, “Should Humans Colonize Other Planets? No” Theology and Science · June <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317888512_Should_Humans_Colonize_Other_Planets_No>]

Examining the history of the U.S. space program reveals an underlying ideology of space exploration that has at its core a rationale for conquest and exploitation. This ideology is deeply rooted in a durable American cultural narrative of frontier pioneering, free enterprise, rugged individualism, and a right to life without limits.8 It is a pastiche of many ideologies, drawing on American exceptionalism, neoliberalism (and its more extremist cousin, libertarianism), the doctrine of manifest destiny, the belief in the necessity of “progress,” and even Russian cosmism.9 A fundamental goal of U.S. space policy since the establishment of NASA in 1958 has been to establish, maintain, and strengthen U.S. leadership in space exploration and the global space community, and the influence of the narrative of American exceptionalism has remained strong in official space rhetoric into the 21st century, promoting the message that USA must be Number 1. The rhetoric of U.S. space policy and advocacy advances a conception of outer space as a place of wide-open spaces and limitless resources – a space frontier. Though the contemporary cultural environment is vastly different from that of the Cold-War era in which human space flight began, the 21st century narrative of U.S. human space exploration to date is still intimately intertwined with what feminist critic Susan Faludi has called “security myth” and “nationalist fantasy,” a story of cowboys on the space frontier.10 In the early 21st century, the trend in the U.S. space community, energized during Ronald Reagan’s administration and reinvigorated during the George W. Bush administration, has been to view the solar system as an environment to exploit, as we have done with our own planetary environment.

#### The frontier mythology guarantees nuclear imperialism and violence

**Slotkin, 1985** - **Professor of American Studies @ Wesleyan** (Richard, Olin, *The Fatal Environment,*  p. 60-61)

This ideology of savage war has become an essential trope of our mythologization of history, a cliche of political discourse especially in wartime. In the 1890s imperialists like Theodore Roosevelt rationalized draconian military measures against the Filipinos by comparing them to Apaches. Samuel Eliot Morison, in his multivolume history of naval operations in the Second World War, recounts the posting of this slogan at fleet headquarters in the South Pacific: "KILL JAPS, KILL JAPS, KILL MORE JAPS!" Suspecting that peacetime readers may find the sentiment unacceptably extreme, Morison offers the following rationale; This may shock you, reader; but it is exactly how we felt. We were fighting no civilized, knightly war . . . We were back to primitive days of fighting Indians on the American frontier; no holds barred and no quarter. The Japs wanted it that way, thought they could thus terrify an "effete democracy"; and that is what they got, with the additional horrors of war that modem science can produce.17 It is possible that the last sentence is an oblique reference to the use of the atomic bomb at the war's end. But aside from that, Morison seems actually to overstate the extraordinary character of the counterviolence against the Japanese (we did, after all, grant quarter) in order to rationalize the strength of his sentiments. Note too the dramatization of the conflict as a vindication of our cultural masculinity against the accusations of "effeteness." The trope of savage war thus enriches the symbolic meaning of specific acts of war, transforming them into episodes of character building, moral vindication, and regeneration. At the same time it provides advance justification for a pressing of the war to the extreme point of extermination, "war without quarter": and it puts the moral responsibility for that outcome on the enemy, which is to say, on its predicted victims. As we analyze the structure and meaning of this mythology of violence, it is important that we keep in mind the distinction between the myth and the real-world situations and practices to which it refers. Mythology reproduces the world with its significances heightened beyond normal measure, so that the smallest actions are heavy with cosmic significances, and every conflict appears to press toward ultimate fatalities and final solutions. The American mythology of violence continually invokes the prospect of genocidal warfare and apocalyptic, world-destroying massacres; and there is enough violence in the history of the Indian wars, the slave trade, the labor/management strife of industrialization, the crimes and riots of our chaotic urbanization, and our wars against nationalist and Communist insurgencies in Asia and Latin America to justify many critics in the belief that America is an exceptionally violent society.