

Should We Colonize Mars?

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Going to Mars is not possible and should never happen. People argue that colonizing Mars is not a viable option because of the resources needed, environmental hazards on Mars, overall cost, issues we have on Earth now, being an ongoing pipedream, and that Mars has its environment not to be interfered with. Although some other problems and beliefs should be addressed, I say that the idea of colonizing Mars has been a topic of fascination for much of our time on Earth. With recent advancements in space exploration, it has become increasingly possible to realize this dream. Others also believe that it is essential for the survival of humanity. I argue that we should colonize Mars as a backup plan for the survival of humanity in case of a catastrophic event on Earth.

Various people argue that colonizing Mars is not a practical option and that it would be a waste of resources according to (*Buchanan, M. Nature Physics, “Colonizing Mars” (2017)*). They point out that we have yet to solve many of the problems that come with living in space for extended periods, such as the lack of gravity and the high radiation levels. Additionally, they argue that we should focus on solving the problems on Earth rather than spending resources on colonizing another planet. In response to that I say that while it is true that colonizing Mars presents many challenges, it is also an opportunity to advance our knowledge and technology in ways that would not be possible if we solely focused on Earth. Furthermore, going to Mars provides a backup plan for humanity in case of a catastrophic event on Earth, such as a massive asteroid impact or a nuclear war. As said in (*Kelechava, Brad. American National Standards Institute, The Benefits of Colonizing Mars, (2016)*), A “doomsday event,” “could mark an end to all life in the known universe.”

Scientists also argue against colonizing Mars because the planet is not a suitable environment for human habitation. Mars has a thin atmosphere, with little to no oxygen, and the

average temperature according to (*Buchanan, (2017)*), is around -80 degrees Fahrenheit. The lack of a magnetic field also means that Mars is bombarded with harmful radiation from space, which is a significant health risk for humans. While Mars may not be an ideal place to live, it is still a better option than staying on Earth in the event of a catastrophic event. Furthermore, according to *Hollingham, Richard. BBC Future, “Five Steps to Colonizing Mars”* (24 Feb. 2022), scientists and engineers are already working on ways to make the planet habitable, such as terraforming and building self-sustaining habitats. Also, in (*Richard, (2022)*), “The first Mars settlers will be living in the capsules they arrive in.” These “capsules” and “domes” will be sustainably correct for things such as power, water, food, temperature, and oxygen.

In addition, most people revert to saying is one of the biggest arguments against colonizing Mars which is that it would be too expensive. The cost of sending people and supplies to Mars would be astronomical, and it would require a significant investment of resources from governments and private organizations. I do agree that it is true that colonizing Mars would be expensive, but it is also a worthwhile investment. The knowledge and technology gained from colonizing Mars would be invaluable, and the potential benefits for humanity are immeasurable. In (*Brad. 2016*), the article talks about SpaceX’s rocket thrust power and strategies for refueling that would not be known without the previous rocket launches to the Moon. Furthermore, these private organizations such as SpaceX have already shown that it is possible to reduce the cost of space travel through reusable rockets and other innovative technologies according to (*Brad. 2016*).

People claim that we should focus on solving problems on Earth, rather than colonizing Mars. This argument against colonizing Mars is rooted in saving rather than spending resources on space exploration. These advocates tell us about the many pressing issues on Earth, such as

climate change, poverty, and inequality, which require our attention and resources. Although we should indeed focus on solving these problems on Earth, it is also essential to have a backup plan in case of a catastrophic event. Colonizing Mars is not an either/or proposition. I believe we can and should work on both solving the problems on Earth and exploring space. An article from *NASA. (n.d.). Meteorites yield evidence of primitive life on early Mars. NASA. 1996*, also suggests that other biological lifeforms came from Mars via a meteorite. This may mean that our life on Earth may not be as valuable as the possible life that is on Mars. Therefore, not going to Mars as soon as we can further deplete the possibilities of discoveries on other planets.

People also say colonizing Mars is a pipe dream and will never happen as stated by *Parker, Laura. GOOD, GOOD “Sorry, Colonizing Mars Is Still a Pipe Dream.” (17 Dec. 2021)*. They point out that we have been talking about going to Mars for decades, but we have yet to send humans to the planet. I say that while it is also true that we have yet to send humans to Mars, we have made considerable progress in space exploration in recent years. Private companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin are making great strides in developing reusable rockets and other technologies that will make space travel more affordable and sustainable as stated in the article *Cox, Ashley. CBS News, CBS Interactive. “SpaceX's Most Powerful Rocket Returns to Flight and Nails Synchronized Landing.” (17 Jan. 2023)*. Furthermore, NASA and other space agencies around the world are continuing to invest in research and development to make Mars colonization a reality. While there are certainly challenges to overcome, the idea of colonizing Mars is no longer a mere pipe dream.

Finally, people argue that colonizing Mars is not ethical and could harm the planet's environment as supported in the article by *Clement, Videl. ResearchGate. “Is Mars Colonization/Settlement Ethical?” (11 Sep. 2018)*. They point out that Mars is a unique and

pristine environment that should be protected, and that introducing humans and their technology to the planet could have negative consequences. Despite the fact we should indeed be mindful of the impact of our activities on Mars, it is also important to recognize that Mars is not a living planet and does not have an ecosystem to protect. Furthermore, if we do not colonize Mars, humanity could face extinction in the event of a catastrophic event on Earth as theorized (Brad, 2016). We must balance the need to protect Mars with the need to ensure the survival of our species.

In conclusion, I believe that we should colonize Mars as a backup plan for the survival of humanity. While there are certainly challenges and expenses associated with Mars colonization, the potential benefits for humanity are immeasurable compared to doing nothing. The knowledge and technology gained from space exploration will benefit us on Earth as well, and the mere possibility of colonizing another planet will inspire future generations to dream big and achieve the impossible. We must approach the challenge of Mars colonization with caution and responsibility, but we must also embrace the possibilities it presents for the future of humanity. Through researching and authoring this essay, I have learned that the debate around colonizing Mars is intricate and diverse. While there are valid concerns and criticisms of the idea, there are also compelling arguments in favor of it. The decision to colonize Mars cannot be made casually, but it is one that we must seriously consider as a species. Additionally, I have learned the significant importance this topic has for me as I would love to be a part of SpaceX and/or NASA in the future to develop rockets and innovative ideas for space that would better the people of Earth and hopefully Mars. I have also learned that the pursuit of scientific knowledge and exploration is an essential part of our humanity and that we should continue to push the

boundaries of what we can achieve as a species. Living on Mars as a getaway from Earth could be the vacation that we all need.

Authors Note: I feel that throughout the article it was extremely hard to find anything that needed rewording or fixed grammatically. This shows a decent amount of progress since starting this class as the past two assignment essays needed revision and editing. I would like to say I am proud but being the perfectionist, I have been and always will be, I feel that I can always improve tremendously. I did, however, find that I did not always back up my argument with more evidence or go into more detail about what the evidence meant for the topic. I also found myself repeating what I had already said as this topic could have used better main points. With the main points I have now, words and evidence over lapse each other in what I mean for my “I Say.” This was not much of an issue though because I had a lot to say for my “I say.” As for the format I only needed to redo the introduction paragraph and the references. When I say “redo” I mean rearrange the sentences and indents. If I had to provide any advice for any future readers and writers, I would say to do more research. Taking the time to find more evidence or even change your mind about the topic you choose can help tremendously.

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