

Neg Backup – Progress

Case Extensions.....	2
Resolutional Analysis.....	2
Value: Progress.....	2
Reason to Prefer 1: Progress Comes First.....	2
Reason to Prefer 2: Progress is Measurable.....	2
Additional Reason to Prefer: Progress Advances Human Flourishing.....	3
Contention 1: Competition Promotes Progress.....	3
Rivalry Fuels Progress.....	3
Contention 2: Cooperation Inhibits Progress.....	3
The Outer Space Treaty Stifled Competition.....	3
Additional Arguments.....	5
1. Leadership in Space is Unifying.....	5
2. Cooperation Doesn't Stop Recklessness.....	5
3. Progress in Space Equals Progress on Earth.....	6
Extra Quotes for NEG speeches.....	6
1. The Necessity of Bold Progress.....	6
2. Leadership Demands Staying Ahead.....	7



Case Extensions

Resolutional Analysis

The resolutional analysis is included to diffuse some of the feel-good aspects of the affirmative side. Cooperation has a very positive connotation in day-to-day life. However, pointing out that the negative side is not devoid of cooperation assists in eliminating some of the influence those connotations may have. It also helps narrow in the area of debate and confronts any claims that negative does not care about working together.

Value: Progress

From the early civilizations to modern spaceflight, progress has been the engine spurring human survival, growth, and achievement. It is what drives societies to overcome challenges and expand the boundaries of what is possible. Without progress, civilizations stagnate. They lose their competitive edge and ultimately fall behind their peers. In space exploration, a field defined by danger and vast potential, progress is essential. In fact, one could argue that progress is a moral value because it captures the duty to improve our condition and unlock new possibilities for the future.

The negative's philosophy here is that space exploration must prioritize the creation of an environment where innovation and bold action are rewarded. Cooperation can play a role, but only in situations in which it accelerates progress. When it slows progress, it must take a backseat.

Reason to Prefer 1: Progress Comes First

This reason to prefer frames progress as the foundation for all other values. It argues that cooperation, sustainability, and fairness only matter after progress has been achieved, because you can't protect or share what doesn't yet exist. Strategically, this gives NEG access to the Affirmative applications and impacts while maintaining a stronger value. Progress expands our understanding of what is possible, and only once that groundwork is laid can other values take hold.

Reason to Prefer 2: Progress is Measurable

This reason to prefer explains that progress gives the round a clear, objective standard for comparison. While values like justice can be vague or subjective, progress can be tracked through observable advancements in technology, science, and society. That makes it easier for judges to evaluate which side is fulfilling progress.

As the Institute of Labor Economics explained in 2023,



“Societal progress is characterized primarily as an improvement in the distribution of wellbeing; however, a small set of additional variables are also necessary. Social indicators based on objective measures are inherently limited by the subjective assessments necessary of “experts” to select and combine measures into indicators. Subjective well-being overcomes this limitation but is insufficient to guide all policy decisions and address certain issues, especially those relating to future concerns. Subjective well-being is the single most important, but necessarily not the only, indicator of progress. This entry also briefly discusses: recent history of well-being measurement; what makes people better off in theory; the difference between subjective and ‘objective’ measures of well-being; their limitations; what we need to improve measures of progress, and examples of government implementation of well-being indicators.”¹

We know progress is happening when more people experience greater well being. Advancements in technology and education contribute directly to this by expanding opportunity, improving quality of life, and pushing the boundaries of human knowledge. These improvements produce measurable impacts, giving judges the opportunity to ground their decisions in measurable advancements, rather than abstract appeals.

Additional Reason to Prefer: Progress Advances Human Flourishing

Progress should be prioritized because it reflects our moral pursuit of excellence. According to Aristotle’s virtue ethics, the highest good is *eudaimonia*, human flourishing, and we achieve it by living virtuously and striving towards our full potential. Aristotle explains this in his work *The Nicomachean Ethics*:

“There remains, then, an active life of the element that has a rational principle; of this, one part has such a principle in the sense of being obedient to one, the other in the sense of possessing one and exercising thought. And, as ‘life of the rational element’ also has two meanings, we must state that life in the sense of activity is what we mean; for this seems to be the more proper sense of the term. Now if the function of man is an activity of soul which follows or implies a rational principle, and if we say ‘so-and-so-and’ a good so-and-so’ have a function which is the same in kind, e.g. a lyre, and a good lyre-player, and so without qualification in all cases, eminence in respect of goodness being added to the name of the function (for the function of a lyre-player is to play the lyre, and that of a good lyre-player is to do so well): if this is the case, and we state the function of man to be a certain kind of life, and this to be an activity or actions of the soul implying a rational principle, and the function of a good man to be the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, human good turns out to be activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete.”²

Space exploration demands exactly those virtues: courage, temperance, prudence, and magnificence, all of which are required in the pursuit of discovery and innovation. Progress, then, is not just a means to receive benefits, but a moral path to live excellently. Valuing progress means valuing the full actualization of human nature.

¹ Werner Eichhorst, Wido Geis-Thöne, and Ulf Rinne, *Measuring Progress* (Bonn, Germany: IZA – Institute of Labor Economics, Policy Paper No. 194, March 2023), 2, <https://docs.iza.org/pp194.pdf>

² Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999), 11.



Contention 1: Competition Promotes Progress

Rivalry Fuels Progress

Explanation: Space exploration has never just been about science. It's always been about national identity. From the very beginning, space exploration served as a symbol of superiority, a stage on which nations could prove their dominance to the world.

Evidence: As the Miller Center explains,

Space became another avenue of competition because of the prospect of atmospheric control and the undeniable message it sent to the international community. National leaders from both countries recognized the opportunity of space exploration from a political perspective and began heavily funding missions. Dominance in the skies was far more important than land battles; it was a way to prove unchallenged superiority to the entire world. From the beginning, the Space Race was an extension of this ideological battle between the two nations. Space became the final frontier for the United States and Soviet Union to compete to prove their status as sole superpower.³

Impact: National pride drives political will, public support, and massive funding. The Apollo missions weren't the product of a peace summit, they came from rivalry. When leaders feel the weight of reputation, they move mountains—and build rockets. Without that urgency, there's no race, no innovation, and no moon landing.

³ Maddie Davis, "The Space Race," *Miller Center, University of Virginia*, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/educational-resources/space-race>



Contention 2: Cooperation Inhibits Progress

The Outer Space Treaty Stifled Competition

Explanation: History proves that cooperation slows progress.

Evidence: In 2007, Dr. John Hickman, a Ph.D. in political science and professor of international affairs, wrote:

Today, human activity in outer space is confined to low Earth orbit and unmanned space exploration of the solar system proceeds at a leisurely pace. The Space Age has sputtered to a crawl and the 1967 Outer Space Treaty deserves a large measure of the blame.⁴

He further writes:

Eliminating the possibility of reaping rewards from a desired activity discourages that desired activity. When the 1967 Outer Space Treaty eliminated the possibility that states could claim territory on the final frontier it also extinguished an important motivation for states and private firms to engage in exploration and development. Had the policy purpose of the treaty been wilderness preservation in outer space then today it would be declared a smashing success. Beyond low Earth orbit, outer space remains a wilderness that benefits no one except astronomers and stargazing lovers. Yet the ostensible policy purpose of the agreement was to encourage space exploration and development in a manner that benefits humanity as a whole. As such, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty was an abysmal failure.

Impact: The Affirmative praises cooperation, but history proves it can paralyze progress. The Outer Space Treaty destroyed incentives to explore and invest in space. It left space empty and undeveloped. Cooperation without competition kills ambition.

⁴ John Hickman, "Still Crazy After Four Decades: The Case for Withdrawing from the 1967 Outer Space Treaty," *The Space Review*, September 24, 2007, <https://www.thespacereview.com/article/960/1>



Additional Arguments

The following can serve either as effective responses in the NR, or potentially as additional content for the Negative Constructive.

1. Leadership in Space is Unifying

According to the Pew Research Center in 2023,

“In a changing world of space exploration defined by intensifying private efforts and competition between a growing number of nations, Americans continue to see an essential role for the United States as a leader in space exploration, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. About seven-in-ten Americans say it is essential that the U.S. continue to be a world leader in space, while 30% say this is not an essential role for the country. Support for a U.S. leadership role in space is widely held across groups, including by majorities of Republicans and Democrats alike.”⁵

Impact: Public opinion reflects the values that shape political will and national identity. For many nations, space competition serves as a unifying force, channeling collective ambition into the pursuit of leadership, innovation, and excellence.

2. Cooperation Doesn't Stop Recklessness

According to a December 2021 article published by the Arms Control Association,

“Russia conducted a direct-ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) test on Nov. 15 to destroy one of its own satellites that has been in orbit since 1982, creating a field of at least 1,500 trackable pieces of debris in low orbit and threatening space operations and human spaceflight.”

Later, the same article goes on to say,

“State Department spokesperson Ned Price added that ‘Russia’s dangerous and irresponsible behavior jeopardizes the long-term sustainability of outer space and clearly demonstrates that Russia’s claims of opposing the weaponization of space are disingenuous and hypocritical.’”⁶

⁵ Pew Research Center. *Americans' Views of Space: U.S. Role, NASA Priorities and Impact of Private Companies*. July 20, 2023.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2023/07/20/americans-views-of-space-u-s-role-nasa-priorities-and-impact-of-private-companies/>.

⁶ Shannon Bugos, “Russian ASAT Test Creates Massive Debris,” *Arms Control Today*, December 2021, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-12/news/russian-asat-test-creates-massive-debris>



Impact: Even cooperative nations can mask harmful ambitions under the guise of diplomacy. Despite participating in treaties and multilateral forums, Russia still conducted a reckless anti-satellite test that endangered all nations. Cooperation isn't a safeguard against bad actors. It can be exploited to appear compliant while secretly undermining shared space security.

3. Progress in Space Equals Progress on Earth

In 2013, the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG) released a report titled *The Benefits Stemming from Space Exploration*, explaining how exploration drives technological and economic progress:

"Space exploration will continue to be an essential driver for opening up new domains in science and technology, triggering other sectors to partner with the space sector for joint research and development. This will return immediate benefits back to Earth in areas such as materials, power generation and energy storage, recycling and waste management, advanced robotics, health and medicine, transportation, engineering, computing and software. Furthermore, innovations required for space exploration, such as those related to miniaturisation, will drive improvements in other space systems and services resulting in higher performance and lower cost. These will in turn result in better services on Earth and better return of investment in institutional and commercial space activities. In addition, the excitement generated by space exploration attracts young people to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, helping to build global capacity for scientific and technological innovation."⁷

Impact: Valuing progress drives innovation that transforms daily life. Advancing space exploration greatly benefits our healthcare, energy, education, and industries. If we don't move forward, we fall behind.

⁷ International Space Exploration Coordination Group. *Benefits Stemming from Space Exploration*. September 2013. PDF.



Extra Quotes for NEG speeches

1. The Necessity of Bold Progress

In a 1962 speech at Rice University, President John F. Kennedy emphasized the importance of bold ambition in space exploration:

“We choose to go to the Moon. We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.”⁸

Impact: Progress in space doesn’t come from playing it safe or waiting for international agreement. It comes from choosing hard challenges and committing to win.

2. Leadership Demands Staying Ahead

In the same 1962 speech at Rice University, Kennedy also spoke about the the importance of staying ahead in the race for space:

“If this capsule history of our progress teaches us anything, it is that man, in his quest for knowledge and progress, is determined and cannot be deterred. The exploration of space will go ahead, whether we join in it or not, and it is one of the great adventures of all time, and no nation which expects to be the leader of other nations can expect to stay behind in the race for space.”⁹

Impact: Kennedy understood that global leadership requires being first, not falling behind. If we want to shape the future of space, we can’t afford to wait. Prioritizing progress ensures we lead rather than follow.

⁸ John F. Kennedy, “Address at Rice University on the Nation’s Space Effort,” September 12, 1962, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/address-at-rice-university-on-the-nations-space-effort>

⁹ Ibid.

