

The Star Trek Fantasy (Will Humans Colonize Space?)

The Star Trek (and Star Wars) fantasy is that humans and other intelligent life forms will “explore strange new worlds, seek out new life and new civilizations, and boldly go where no one has gone before.” This is an engaging thought, but it is pure fantasy (as is most science “fiction”). The cold hard fact is that the Earth is unique in the cosmos. There are no other worlds capable of harboring and supporting advanced life forms. This fact has been made clear from recent astronomical research, the results of which have been compiled and summarized for the public in books such as [Rare Earth](#) and [Improbable Planet](#).

What about colonizing the Moon or Mars? The problem is that both of these places are extremely inhospitable to life. Anyone who visits either of these places must bring along all of the necessities of life, including food, water, and air. None of these necessities are available or producible on the Moon or Mars. So the cost of living on either of these places is prohibitive, even for a short period of time.

It’s possible that scientific explorations and expeditions will be mounted to explore these places for brief periods of time, but colonies are impossible. In fact, the costs of short visits are already so exorbitant, and the benefits so meager, that the vision of exploration missions will eventually be abandoned also, probably after the first gruesome deaths from a space accident.

What about “[terraforming](#)” the Moon or Mars to make the place inhabitable? The problem here is the astronomical amount of [conditions](#) that don’t exist on these places, and that must be fine-tuned for this to happen. There aren’t enough resources on Earth to produce all of these required fine-tuned conditions on the Moon or Mars.

So the future for humans is here on Earth. We must find our meaning and purpose here.