

This shift, he says, will involve “managed degrowth” initially to stabilise the destruction of the environment. I remain sceptical of such narratives — not to mention the practical feasibility of getting such initiatives under way. Nonetheless it is important to understand ideas one might not necessarily agree with and Rapley’s style makes for an entertaining, sweeping read.



Looking ahead to a June publication, while others debate the role of private markets on Earth, Rainer Zitelman, an economic historian and sociologist, is thinking about how to unleash their power extraterritorially in **New Space Capitalism: The Entrepreneurial Path to the Stars** (Skyhorse Publishing \$32.99).

With Elon Musk’s SpaceX planning a bumper initial public offering and Artemis II’s lunar mission under way, this is a well-timed and fascinating read. The author argues that commercial expansion into space, from asteroid mining to colonising Mars, is important for ongoing human progress and economic growth, back on Earth. But, he contends, to do this well governments ought to step back and allow private companies and competition to unlock innovation. He says this can only occur “when it is possible to own, buy, and sell land on other celestial bodies”.

Zitelman strikingly compares and contrasts the history of space exploration through public missions and private enterprise. His book is an insightful must-read for those intrigued by mankind’s next giant leap.