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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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THE FINAL FRONTIER: HOW ARTISTS WILL INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION TO HOMESTEAD IN SPACE

Abstract

Humans may be destined to become a multi-planet species. Within the next two generations, the world could be ready to establish its first colonies in space. This paper discusses two non-technical, societal challenges to be overcome before humans can become homesteaders in space, and provides examples of efforts underway to proactively resolve them. The paper highlights the innovative partnerships of the Museum of Science Fiction with several US Government Agencies as an example of effective collaboration. Finally, the paper suggests ways to expand on current efforts to maximize their reach and benefits.

The first societal challenge issue is a lack of awareness and appreciation for the space industry. The paper describes current attitudes toward space in the United States and other countries with established space programs. This information is contrasted with attitudes of space exploration from the era leading up to and during Apollo. A case is established for leveraging artists, especially in the entertainment industry, to inspire interest and appreciate for aerospace.

The second issue stems from the first, and that is a critical lack or lag in the workforce pipeline. That is, not enough interested and qualified individuals are expected to seek employment that supports aerospace. The paper investigates the needs for future workforce in the 30 year horizon and compares this against current forecasts for talent. A case is established for broadening the aerospace industry to be more inclusive of non-technical individuals who can apply other talents toward space missions.

As a means to solve these societal challenges, the paper provides recommendations for the sciences and humanities to combine efforts. By doing so, "Life in Space" could become a self-fulfilling prophecy for a generation influenced and excited by the visions of artists who can see humans living beyond Earth's orbit.

Collaborations such as this are underway. The paper provides examples of initiatives among government, academia, museums, the aerospace industry, and artists that are focused on increasing interest and excitement for a future in space. A special focus on the collaboration between the (Name to be released - Embargoed Until Feb 12, 2016) and the Museum of Science Fiction will be discussed. The paper concludes with recommendations for expanding on collaborations such as these for maximum impact.