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STEM, STEAM AND SHAPE IN THE SPACE ARCHIVE: DEFINING THE ROLE OF ARCHIVES IN AEROSPACE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Abstract

This paper will examine the definition of the word archive/archives as it relates to the collection and study of aerospace materials and how this correlates to user perceptions of the archive. Traditionally aerospace is seen as a scientific field, and with the rise in STEM programming there is a clear link between the archive and STEM. The traditional arts and humanities roots of the archive, however, does not always fit the STEM education paradigm. Alignments/alternatives to these methods include STEAM, which integrates the arts, and SHAPE, which instead places emphasis on the social sciences, humanities and the arts for people and the economy. How do archivists engage with these paradigms and plan for offering access to and programming for these disparate views of what the space archive is and does? This paper has three primary points of emphasis. First is an overview of what types of materials may be found in an aerospace archive, and how this type of facility may differ from or be similar to space museums, libraries, and science centers. Second is a summary of the role of these type facilities in aerospace research and education that reveal a variety of uses by both the specialized researcher and the broader public. Third is an examination of how STEM. STEAM, and SHAPE researchers utilize archival and special collections, and how these approaches may be useful to framing archival outreach and education.