

Sheila Danko

Web Bio

Information

Biography

Biographical Statement

Professor Danko's multi-disciplinary design background includes formal training in architecture, industrial, graphic, and interior design. Her scholarship focuses on the intersection of design and leadership. Her goal is to expand the everyday concept of design beyond material artifact to include an understanding of how design process and product can be a tool for transformational leadership and social change across a variety of disciplines.

Department Website Summary

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Teaching

Teaching and Advising Statement

My teaching merges theories of transformational leadership and leadership development with an understanding of creative design process. My goal is to empower students to lead change. Utilizing case study comparison and analysis, students learn critical thinking and creative problem solving methods. I believe in experiential, hands-on learning combined with reflective writing to give students a greater understanding of themselves and an inside look at the process of designing change.

Professional

Current Professional Activities

- J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship
- Member, International Leadership Association
- Member, Interior Design Educators Council
- Ad Hoc Reviewer, *Journal of Interior Design*

- Editorial Board, *Research Design Connections*
- Refereed Instructor, Interior Design Educators Council Academy
- Fellow Atkinson Center for Sustainable Futures

Research

Current Research Activities

Professor Danko speaks and writes internationally on design as a tool for leadership and social change. Understanding design as a transformational tool (vs material artifact) is key to leadership. She is currently working on several interrelated research projects including:

3C Design: Tools for Designing Connected, Collaborative and Creative Workplaces

An integrated approach using social sensing technologies and strategic self-reporting to provide data and then develop evidence-based design guidelines for decision-makers who are planning 3C workplaces for tomorrow's knowledge workers

Redesigning Business: Strategic Stories of Leadership, Creative Problem-Solving and Social Change

Design is of great relevance to a new generation of entrepreneurs who are merging social activism with business. Their stories of aspiration - both as entrepreneurs and activists - weave together creativity and leadership from a whole systems view. Their stories, taken from on-site interviews, transcribed and constructed into narratives, allow the reader to get "inside their designing minds" to see creative problem-solving at its best. Rich with goals, constraints, risk and opportunity, these storied collections of innovative business practices help redefine the concept of design from a business perspective and explore the potential of design thinking to transform business into a social change agent.

Making a Difference by Design utilizes a case study approach to understanding design in daily life. The cases combine leadership theory with product and process innovation across a wide range of disciplines including business, human development, education, community, and global sustainability to illustrate how design can support and enrich human experience.

Extension

Education

Education

- Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI, M.I.D. Industrial Design, 1983
- College for Creative Studies, Detroit, MI, Graphic Design & Commercial Arts, 1980-82
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, B.S. Architecture, 1978

Courses

Courses Taught

DEA 1110- Making a Difference by Design (present)

Past coursework:

DEA 4402 - Design Studio VIII: Design & Strategic Business Planning

DEA 6450 - Dancing Mind/Thinking Heart: Creative Problem-Solving Theory and Practice

NBA 6110 - Creative Design for Affordability

Websites

Administration

Administrative Responsibilities

Chair/DEA, 2009- present Design and Environmental Analysis

Advisory Board Member, Atkinson Center for Sustainable Futures, Cornell University **Advisory Board Member**, Center of Outdoor Education, Cornell University

Faculty Fellow, Atkinson Center for Sustainable Futures, Cornell University

Member, FSAD Graduate Field

Member, Fine Arts Graduate Field

Publications

Selected Publications

Danko, S. (in press). Designing Emotional Connection into the Workplace: A story of authentic leadership, In J. Thompson and N. Blossom (Eds.), *The Blackwell Handbook of Interior Design*, New York: Wiley

Danko, S. (2010). Perspective: On designing change *Journal of Interior Design*, 36(1), v-ix.

Danko, S. (2010). The Designing Change Project: Lessons in Design Leadership from Activist Entrepreneurs. Presentation at the Stanford Technology Ventures Roundtable on Entrepreneurship Education, University of Edinburgh, UK.

Meneely, J., and **Danko, S.**, (2007). Motive, mind and media: Digital sketching in the creative culture of design, *Journal of Interior Design*, 32(3), pp 69-90.

Danko, S., Meneely, J., and Portillo, M. (2006). Humanizing design through narrative inquiry. *Journal of Interior Design*, 31(2), 10-28.

Danko, S. (2005). Crossing boundaries: Reframing entrepreneurship as a social change agent. Proceedings of the Internationalizing Entrepreneurship Education Conference, Guildford, UK.

Danko, S. (2003). Nurturing whole person development and leadership

through narrative. *Journal of Interior Design*, 29(1&2), 82-96.

Vithayathawornwong, S., **Danko, S.**, and Tolbert, P. (2003). The role of the physical environment in promoting creativity in organizational settings. *Journal of Interior Design*, 29(1&2), 1-16.

Danko, S. and Portillo, M. (2001). Reaching out: The common language of strategic stories. *Interiors & Sources*, J/A, 94-99.

Danko, S. (2000). "Beneath the Surface: A Story of Leadership, Recruitment and Retention and the Hidden Dimensions of Interior Design" *Journal of Interior Design*, 26/2, 1-24.

Portillo, M. and **Danko, S.** et al. (1999). "FIDER's Latest Research Directive: Strategic Stories," *Interiors and Sources*, J/A 98: 90-91.

Danko, S. (1992). Section III: The Project: Project Control Book, In J. Thompson (Ed.), *American Society of Interior Designers Professional Practice Manual* (pp. 109-166). New York: Whitney Library of Design

Danko, S. (1989). Inside the creative design process: Five firms/Five profiles, In J. Dohr (Ed.), *The Polsky papers*, pp. 1-9. Grand Rapids, MI: FIDER