

Creative Scholarship/Research

Research Philosophy

My scholarship reflects a philosophy of designer as generalist and the desire to expand the body of knowledge in design through education as a practitioner-scholar. The pursuit of functioning as a practitioner-scholar is consistent with product design's nature as an applied art. My current line of scholarship follows a logical progression that has emerged from the intersection of my current practice and my graduate work "Design for Non-Designers" conducted at The Ohio State University and focused on researching and creating a process of developing ideas. This has led me to produce a body of work that includes lectures, workshops, papers and currently the writing of a book around the value of designer as change agent.

Over the past six years, most of the energy of my scholarship has been directed towards the development of the Product Design Program at Drexel University. The combination of my practice and academic career is reflected in the program's pedagogy. My breadth of experience has been built into the program and has informed the creation of new research that can extend beyond tenure as I continue to build a strong reputation for the program. Because the program is now underway, my focus can turn towards creating new thinking in product development, keeping in line with the changes in society. I will continue a career in design that brings focus towards joy in objects through experience and interaction, as well as contemplative researching and writing about the value of disruptive ideas, designer-as-change agent, designer-as perception-changer and designer-as-entrepreneur.

My professional work reflects the influence of the designer as author. Just as writers are expected to express a voice, opinion and point of view that is carefully developed through years of practice, designers should be valued for doing the same thing. Writers express their authorship through words; we express ours through form. My work involves problem solving, audience, and context, but the true value lies in the precious filter of the author's unique human experience and creating objects for everyday use with the express purpose of bringing joy to the end user. I put my own designer's spin, or authorship, onto each project, in the hopes of sharing the passion for life with everyone who comes into contact with my work.

Selected Samples of Scholarship and Professional work

Like most designers, I eat, sleep, and dream design, and the lines between teaching, research and professional work are often hard to separate. Each component in this triangle works in service to the other. Each builds on the other, and all work is driven by the same philosophy. Realizing this, I try to the best of my ability to bring value from each activity back to the classroom and back to Drexel to blend my professional and scholarly work. My professional work is run through a not-for-profit design firm called Spank Design that is a labor of love and is a collaboration with independent designer, roboticist, author and artist Carla Diana. Spank is born out of the desire to change the value of design and is centered-around joyful design services.



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