Blurred Lines? Perceptions of Architects Practicing Interior Design

An architect’s choice to practice interior design certainly is not a new phenomenon. Historically, architects engaged in design services for the interiors of their buildings prior to the development of what is now the business of interior design. One might anticipate that with the professionalization of interior design with services performed by educated, trained, certified and licensed design professionals that architects would forego interior design and focus more keenly on core-and-shell architecture. However, in many instances, this is not the case. There are likely and persuasive reasons underlying this mode of professional practice that have compelled it to occur that are still either inadequately defined or poorly understood. The presentation will report on the author’s research and data observations that address perceptions of architects that choose to practice interior design. This presentation’s intended audience includes architects, interior designers, design instructors, and emerging design students that are in the process of bridging the gap between professional practice and academic instruction. Its purpose is to look at the two professions’ differences and commonalities, potentially lending further context to the identities of both professions, and adding to a growing discussion in others’ research on this issue that. It is anticipated that the presentation will support a very interactive session wherein others’ research, observations, and opinions on professional practice and academic instruction will allow for a dynamic and productive discussion that will undergird a continuation and broadening of the research.