

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MEDICAL SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND THE ARTS
PROGRAM IN AMERICAN CULTURE

Alexandra Stern, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medical School and Assistant Professor, Program in American Culture, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, with tenure, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medical School and Associate Professor, Program in American Culture, without tenure, College of Literature, Science and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1999	University of Chicago
M.A.	1992	University of California, San Diego
B.A.	1990	San Francisco State University

Professional Record:

2002-Present	Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Michigan
2002-Present	Assistant Professor, Program in American Culture, University of Michigan
2000-2002	Assistant Professor of History, University of California, Santa Cruz

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Dr. Stern is a dynamic and devoted teacher on issues of the history of medicine and science, reproduction, gender, ethics, and society in America. She teaches a course on reproductive health ethics for the third-year rotation in obstetrics and gynecology and has delivered many lectures to medical student audiences. Dr. Stern developed a new first-year seminar for the College of LS&A, *Medicine, Health, and the Body in Modern America*, which she taught as American Culture 102. In addition, she and Dr. Howard Markel co-taught in Winter 2004 and Winter 2005 the core course for the Program in Science, Technology, and Society, *Social Dynamics of Science, Technology, and Medicine*. She developed a module on Latino Health for the Program in American Culture's Latino Studies course. In addition, Dr. Stern has supervised undergraduate theses and graduate dissertations in topics related to health, society, and culture. As the course evaluations and letters of appreciation attest, Dr. Stern is a highly esteemed teacher who communicates effectively in the classroom and inspires many students to pursue career paths related to the history and sociology of medicine and society.

Research: Dr. Stern is internationally recognized and critically acclaimed. She is an exceptionally productive scholar who has published numerous articles and delivered dozens of lectures at home and abroad. In 2005 her path-breaking book, Eugenic Nation: Faults and

Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America, was published in the prestigious “American Crossroads” series of the University of California Press, one of the nation’s most distinguished, peer-reviewed academic publishers in the United States. This book explores how hereditarian ideas influenced medicine and society in the United States, particularly in California and the Southwest. One reviewer praises her book, “Stern brilliantly exposes the dark role that the Golden State played as a leader in the closely-linked eugenics and early conservation movements. By demonstrating how theory became practice in California’s institutions and laws, and how those ideas persist today, she reveals the survival of demons we thought we had vanquished.” A monograph of such high quality is the gold standard for promotion among her historian peers. Her research provided the basis for a major symposium held in Sacramento in October 2005, “From Eugenics to Designer Babies: Engineering the California Dream” at which Dr. Stern delivered the keynote address and other well-known historians, health policy experts, and legislators discussed the history and legacy of eugenics in California. Dr. Stern is recognized as a national expert on the history of eugenics and has been quoted in major newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Sacramento Bee*. Dr. Stern also co-edited the well-received anthology, Formative Years: Children’s Health in the United States, 1880-2000, published by the University of Michigan Press in cloth in 2002 and in paperback in 2004. This book has been lauded as one of the most significant books ever to be published on the history of American pediatrics and children’s health. Dr. Stern’s next major project will focus on the history of genetic counseling and human genetics in the post-World War II period. She has received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship and a National Institutes of Health-National Library of Medicine Publication Grant to support this research from 2006 to 2008. Dr. Stern has won awards for her work, including the prestigious Berkshire Conference of Women Historians Article Prize in 2000.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Stern AM, Markel H: The History of Vaccines and Immunization: Familiar Patterns, New Challenges. *Health Affairs* 24(3):611-621, 2005.

Stern AM: *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* Berkeley. University of California Press, 2005.

Stern AM, Markel H: International Efforts to Control Infectious Diseases, 1851 to the Present. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 292(12):1474-1479, 2004.

Stern AM: Making Better Babies: Public Health and Race Betterment in Indiana, 1920-1935. *American Journal of Public Health* 92(5):742-752, 2002.

Stern AM: Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 79(1):41-81, 1999.

Service: Dr. Stern admirably serves the Medical School in her capacity as Associate Director of the Center for the History of Medicine and performs many duties in this position. For example, Dr. Stern is in charge of the Center’s Oral History Program, which records the life stories of distinguished UMMS emeriti and alumni in the form of interviews and transcriptions that are

deposited in the Bentley Historical Library. She has served as a faculty sponsor of the Victor Vaughan Medical Student Society for the History and Philosophy of Medicine, organizing the annual schedule and working closing with medical students. Dr. Stern has performed service for the University by serving on departmental committees in the Medical School and the College of LS&A and campus-wide committees. In addition, she performs national service by serving on national advisory boards, reviewing manuscripts for presses, and reviewing grant applications.

External Review:

Reviewer A: “Her career trajectory thus far has been stellar. It is clear that she is on her way to becoming one of the leading historians of medicine in the United States....I can assuredly rank Dr. Stern as one of the top five junior historians whose career I have had the opportunity to assess.”

Reviewer B: “It is clear that Dr. Stern deserves promotion to Associate Professor. She has been a prolific scholar and one that has already made a very significant contribution to knowledge and to the history of science and medicine. I strongly support her candidacy and believe the University of Michigan will be amply rewarded by her presence on its faculty.”

Reviewer C: “Dr. Stern has emerged as a major historian of the eugenics movement, speaking all over the country and the world....Dr. Stern is an extraordinary scholar, someone who the University of Michigan should treasure.”

Reviewer D: “Dr. Stern has a record of productive and creative scholarship. She has published many other innovative and influential essays on U.S. eugenics, infectious disease control, and immunization...”

Reviewer E: “Her ability to bring the skills of historiography, health policy analysis, and sociology to a university would certainly make her a versatile and valuable member of the faculty at any institution preparing its graduates to function in the interdisciplinary and complex world of the health sciences today.”

Reviewer F: “...I am impressed with, indeed envious of, her ability to win grants and fellowship from prestigious institutions....Dr. Stern would most certainly be given tenure and promotion [at this institution] based on her record of scholarly productivity, grants and fellowships, and service to the scholarly community.”

Reviewer G: “Dr. Stern is a scholar of outstanding caliber, whose creative, insightful, and careful scholarship would make her an asset to any academic department.”

Reviewer H: “She has been very successful in competing for very limited fund of research grants available to historians....Her success in the competition for those funds speaks volumes for the judgment of scholars for the quality of her research and the importance of her on-going projects.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Dr. Alexandra Stern has made major and significant contributions to medical history research and education through scientific inquiry, lectures, grant awards from numerous sources and mentoring efforts. She has already made a number of germinal contributions to our understanding of medicine and society and will, undoubtedly, continue to do so. She plays an integral role in the future success of the Center for the History of Medicine and its collaborative efforts with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology as well as several other units in the School of Medicine and across the University of Michigan including the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and Rackham School of Graduate Studies. We are pleased to recommend Dr. Stern for promotion to Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, with tenure, in the Medical School and Associate Professor, Program in American Culture, without tenure, College of Literature, Science and the Arts.



Allen S. Lichter, M.D.
Dean, Medical School
*Newman Family Professor
of Radiation Oncology*



Terrence J. McDonald, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Literature,
Science and the Arts

May 2006