

May 14, 2009

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Kerstin Barndt, assistant professor of Germanic languages and literatures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1999	Free University of Berlin
MA	1989	Free University of Berlin

Professional Record:

2002 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
2001 – 2002	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
1998 – 2000	Lecturer, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan.

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Barndt has developed a strong pedagogical profile in her undergraduate and graduate courses, and her teaching is deeply grounded in her scholarly expertise. In her undergraduate teaching Professor Barndt makes extensive use of new technological media, including interactive web sites, virtual city tours, and web-based course archives that provide students with everything from photographs to text excerpts. The majority of students give her high recommendations and are impressed with the range of her knowledge. She is highly sought after as a mentor to graduate students.

Research – Professor Barndt’s first book was published by a prestigious German academic publishing house. It is based on her prize-winning dissertation (*Women in German* Dissertation Prize, 2000), which was revised and expanded for publication. Her second book manuscript, *Exhibition Effects: History, Aesthetics, Memory in Germany*, is near completion. Other publications include a co-edited collection of essays forthcoming as well as several peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. Her recent research has moved to a deep interdisciplinary perspective and there is a clear upward trajectory in terms of theoretical sophistication and scholarly breadth that the Department expects to continue.

Recent and Significant Publications:

*Weimar Publics / Weimar Subjects. Rethinking the Political Culture of Germany in the 1920s*, co-edited with K. Canning, Berghahn Books, forthcoming 2009.

“Aesthetics of crisis. Motherhood, abortion, and melodrama in Irmgard Keun and Friedrich Wolf,” in *Women in German Yearbook: Feminist Studies in German Literature and Culture, Volume 24*, 2008, pp. 71-95.

*Sentiment und Sachlichkeit: Der Roman der Neuen Frau in der Weimarer Republik (Sentiment and Sobriety: The Novel of the New Woman in Weimar Germany)*, Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau, 2003.

“Railroads for locomotives of the mind,” *Tracking Culture and Crisis in the S. Fischer Verlag*, *Germanic Review*, 76(4), 2001, pp. 335-348.

Service – Professor Barndt’s contributions have been more than appropriate: she served twice on the Executive Committee, participated in two faculty searches, acted as supervisor of the German honors students, co-organized two major international conferences, and is involved in planning a series of events commemorating the fall of the Berlin wall. She has been active in Michigan’s new Museum Studies Program and is a member of the Museum Theme Semester Steering Committee.

#### External Reviews:

##### Reviewer (A)

“I find...[Barndt’s] argument [in *Exhibition Effects*] cogently presented and distinctive: the variety of exhibition sites, the sensitivity to manifold historical-temporal frameworks, and an awareness of the socio-economic implications of it all, serve her well. I look forward to the completion of the last section on the new museums of migration, which are a recent and distinctive phenomenon on the German cultural landscape. The manuscript, though incomplete, is conceptually solid and well-written. I have no doubt that an academic publisher would be ready to review it.”

##### Reviewer (B)

“...[Barndt] has not only shown herself to be closely familiar with German- and English-language scholarship but also makes productive use of concepts from other fields, including film studies, cultural anthropology, and comparative museum studies. ...the new project on “Exhibition Effects” shows Barndt as an original thinker and persuasive writer; she [is] well on her way to becoming both a major voice in German studies and an important mediator between German studies and other academic fields.”

##### Reviewer (C)

“Professor Barndt has established herself not only as a scholar of the broader literary and cultural history of the Weimar Republic...but also of the historical and theoretical debates concerning the exhibition and musealization of culture at the turn of the twenty-first century. ...her first book will definitely be regarded as a standard work and her second book shows many promising signs of making a similarly important contribution, once it appears in print.”

##### Reviewer (D)

“...given the inevitable interdisciplinary consequences of her work, I have the sense that a ‘balanced’ department of Germanic languages and literatures – and more specifically the truly interdisciplinary department at Michigan – is exactly the appropriate location for a scholar whose interests are spread across such disciplines as history, cultural studies, literature studies, and historical and cultural aspects of museum exhibitions.”

Reviewer (E)

“Barndt has obviously read widely in literary, critical and aesthetic theory and is comfortable with a broad range of approaches to written and visual texts... With great skill she takes an idea, a concept, an approach of another scholar, explains it clearly and succinctly, and then uses it as a tool to probe her own materials, in the process turning up not just new angles on those materials, but also new angles on the theory or concept itself. (This ability—which she demonstrates in all her publications—makes me think she must be an excellent teacher, though I have never seen her teach.)”

Reviewer (F)

“...[Barndt’s] work is in line with the general direction of Michigan’s German department – a direction that pursues an emphatically crossdisciplinary cultural studies approach. Her tenure would consolidate the profile of the department as one of the most innovative German departments in the country.”

Reviewer (G)

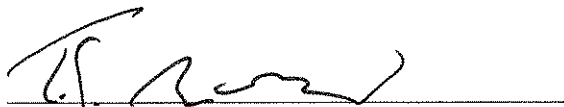
“...[Barndt] is an innovative, well-published, and astute scholar. ... Her written work contributes productively to a whole range of subfields within German studies, but also to a number of adjacent disciplines such as the growing discipline of museum studies. Her writing is of impressive clarity, intellectual independence, mature conceptual power, and persuasive design, while at the same time venturing out into new and uncharted intellectual and interpretative territories. I have read or reread every line of her tenure package with great pleasure and profit.”

Reviewer (H)

“...[*Sentiment und Sachlichkeit*] is a very major accomplishment. ... [Barndt’s] work is interdisciplinary in the best of senses, exhaustively consults a wide range of sources including many archives, draws innovatively on theories, approaches and analyses from outside of and within German Studies to illuminate this period of German culture, and is very skilled at close reading.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Barndt is a cutting edge scholar, an excellent teacher, and a valued citizen. The Executive Committee and I recommend that Assistant Professor Kirsten Barndt be promoted to the rank of associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Terrence J. McDonald  
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,  
Professor of History, and Dean  
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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