

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

Approved by the Regents
May 20, 2010

Anna R. Kirkland, assistant professor of women's studies, and assistant professor of political science, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of women's studies, with tenure, and associate professor of political science, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2003	University of California, Berkeley
J.D.	2001	University of California, Berkeley
M.A.	1997	University of Virginia
B.A.	1995	Davidson College

Professional Record:

2007 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies and Department of Political Science, University of Michigan
2006	Visiting Assistant Professor, Law School, University of Michigan
2004 – present	Assistant Professor, Women's Studies Program, University of Michigan
2004	Lecturer, Department of Political Science and Women's Studies Program, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluations:

Teaching – Professor Kirkland is a committed and talented teacher of undergraduate and graduate students. She has served on two dissertation committees and five preliminary examination committees in the Departments of Women's Studies, Political Science, Sociology, and in the Law School. She also served as an advisor to four undergraduate honors theses and supervised independent study or honors conversion papers for six undergraduates. Her classroom teaching has been wide-ranging with eleven different courses from large introductory courses to freshman and graduate seminars cross-listed between the Departments of Women's Studies, Political Science, and Sociology, as well as in the University of Michigan Initiative on Disability Studies.

Research – Professor Kirkland is the only trained legal studies scholar in the Department of Women's Studies, and she brings the strengths of a legal studies scholar, a knowledge of public law within political science, and a commitment to feminist legal and political theory. She writes as well as teaches on sex and gender in the law, on anti-discrimination law as it impacts gender and race, and on how rights work in legal discourse. Her book, *Fat Rights: Dilemmas of Difference and Personhood*, heralds Professor Kirkland's emergence as a major feminist contributor to rights law and to anti-discrimination law since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She also has eight articles in refereed journals, including three in flagship journals of three different fields. She also co-edited a book with invited essays by thirteen leading scholars entitled *Against Health: Has Health Become the New Morality?*

Recent and Significant Publications:

Against Health: Has Health Become the New Morality? co-edited with J. Metzl, New York University Press, forthcoming 2010.

“The environmental account of obesity: A case for feminist skepticism,” *Signs*, 35(4), forthcoming 2010.

Fat Rights: Dilemmas of Difference and Personhood, New York University Press, 2008.

“Think of the hippopotamus: Rights consciousness in the fat acceptance movement,” *Law and Society Review*, 42(2), 2008, pp. 397-431.

Service – Professor Kirkland has actively engaged in many kinds of service at all levels of this university. She has served on every standing committee in the Department of Women’s Studies and has done significant work on the undergraduate committee structuring the honors program. She has been a vital presence on the Michigan Initiative on Disability Studies Steering Committee, serving as assistant director since 2008. She also planned two conferences through the Rackham Graduate School and served on the public law search committee in the Department of Political Science. Nationally Kirkland has been active in the Law and Society Association and served on the awards committee for the American Political Science Association.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Reading her work, one gets a strong sense that she is developing a signature approach without at the same time become repetitive or predictable. Despite the identifiable themes in her work, I get no sense that she is wise before the event – i.e. that she offers answers in advance of framing her questions. On the contrary, one of the things that makes Kirkland’s work careful, thoughtful and engaging is that she seems genuinely committed to open inquiry about whatever topic she is addressing.”

Reviewer (B)

“*Fat Rights* is a book of exceptional quality and originality and is among the most significant books to be published in the field in the last ten years. The book represents an ambitious effort to interrogate the legal categories that have dominated antidiscrimination law and the complexities in this area of law that have emerged since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The analysis is exceptionally sharp and provides a definitive statement about the evolution of antidiscrimination law and policy.”

Reviewer (C)

“In my estimation, she ranks with the very best scholars at similar career stages. As a public law scholar, her elaborations of the constructed and constitutive character of legal categories are sophisticated and compelling. ... If I were to compile a list of the most significant books or articles to appear recently in the field of feminist theory, I would surely include the two *Signs* articles.”

Reviewer (D)

“...this case is so easy and straightforward. ... As indicated, the *Signs* article on transgender discrimination is the only one I had previously read, and it is very good; smart, thoughtful, nuanced, complex. What I like about it is a feature that I found in other materials of

hers...which is that she takes up a particular issue or case as a way to open up much broader thematic and substantive questions and problems that extend beyond the immediate issue.”

Reviewer (E)

“Each of these facets of rights and their effects is important. The[y] have been subject to separate attention from sociologists, empirical political scientists, political theorists, and legal academics. Kirkland is able to address them all effectively because she is a true interdisciplinary scholar with an unusual array of skills and abilities.”

Reviewer (F)

“I have taught a graduate seminar on ‘Rights’ for fifteen years, and I immediately thought that this is the book [*Fat Rights*] that fills the gap in the readings that I have long lamented. ... The book is rigorously theorized, deeply thoughtful, and highly instructive in many ways. It is also well written, which makes it easy to engage even when the analysis becomes complex and intricate, which is often the case.”

Reviewer (G)

“I found Kirkland’s writing subtle, thought provoking, out of the ordinary, out of the box, and genuinely important. She has a clear, well defined voice and appears to be raising it with increasing confidence.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Kirkland’s work is truly interdisciplinary. She is an excellent teacher and a very active citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Anna R. Kirkland be promoted to the rank of associate professor of women’s studies, with tenure, and associate professor of political science, without 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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