

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

Approved by the Regents  
May 20, 2010

Elisha P. Renne, associate professor of anthropology, with tenure, and associate professor of Afroamerican and African studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of anthropology, with tenure, and professor of Afroamerican and African Studies, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1990	New York University
M.Phil.	1987	New York University
M.A.	1985	University of Minnesota
B.A.	1970	New College

Professional Record:

2002 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology and Center for Afroamerican and African Studies (CAAS), University of Michigan
1998 – 2002	Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology and Center for Afroamerican and African Studies, University of Michigan
1995 – 1998	Lecturer, Princeton University
1994 – 1995	Visiting Lecturer, Ahmadu Bello University
1994	Visiting Assistant Professor, Emory University
1991 – 1993	Postdoctoral Fellow, The Australian National University
1991 – 1992	Visiting Lecturer, Ondo State University

Summary of Evaluations:

Teaching – Professor Renne teaches essential courses of the core curricula in Anthropology and CAAS. She has developed new courses, teaching methods, and programs that derive from her own research. Her undergraduate lectures and graduate seminars, some of which are also cross-listed in Women's Studies, are notable for their breadth and interdisciplinary appeal. Professor Renne is able to translate her many areas of expertise into an interdisciplinary pedagogy that brings biology into conversation with demography, archaeology with material culture, and culture with economics and political science. She has worked extensively with graduate students in the Department of Anthropology and with those in other units across the College and in the School of Social Work, and she has served on several dissertation committees across schools and departments.

Research – Professor Renne is an internationally recognized scholar whose multifaceted and multicultural research reflects a depth of inquiry that comes from 25 years of sustained archival, demographic, and ethnographic research in Nigeria and West Africa. She has published a second single-authored book, a co-edited volume, and a third single-authored book is forthcoming from Indiana University Press. She continues to actively publish peer-reviewed articles in leading journals, and her book chapters appear in important edited volumes in African studies, textile studies, and medical anthropology. Her many publications appeal to a wide variety of readers

within and outside the academy, from social scientists to public health professionals, and from demographers to policymakers.

Recent and Significant Publications:

*The Politics of Polio in Northern Nigeria*, Indiana University Press, forthcoming.

“Consecrated garments and spaces in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church Diaspora,” *Material Religion*, 5(1), 2009, pp. 70-87.

“Abortion as illegal conduct and its sequelae,” *Curare: Studies in Ethnomedicine*, 29(1), 2006, pp. 81-95.

*Yoruba Religious Textiles: Essays in Honour of Cornelius Oyeleke Adepegba*, with B. Agbaje-Williams, (co-ed.), Book Builders, 2005.

Service – Professor Renne is much in demand and praised for her professionalism and dedication as well as for her efficiency and effectiveness. In Anthropology, she has chaired the socio-cultural anthropology subfield, has served on the Executive and Admissions Committees, and has chaired and/or served on several promotion and review committees. Her service profile in CAAS is just as impressive, and she is presently editing a volume on the future of Black Studies commemorating CAAS’s 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the University level Professor Renne was elected to the LSA Curriculum Committee, served as a program leader in Ghana, and has served on Rackham, International Institute, Medical School, UM-GHRT, and CEW committees. Her leadership role extends to key positions in the African Studies Association, including National program chair, and consultations with the CDC on immunization programs in Nigeria. Professor Renne is a tireless reviewer for major journals and funding agencies.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...[Professor Renne’s] expertise extends from demographic studies, to medication anthropology, to material culture. She is solidly grounded in historical perspectives, in an ability to analyze the transnational implications of her work for African diaspora studies, and in multi-disciplinary work.”

Reviewer (B)

“...[*The Politics of Polio in Northern Nigeria*] is an excellent ethnography of the cultural context of polio and related programs in Northern Nigeria.”

Reviewer (C)

“Elisha Renne is among the finest and most productive anthropologists engaged in interdisciplinary work in Africa. Her impressive list of articles, book chapters, collaborative work with African scholars, demonstrates a sustained record of scholarly production... ...[her books and edited volumes are] theoretical and methodological models for related trans-disciplinary research.”

Reviewer (D)

“Elisha Renne’s scholarship exemplifies an anthropologist working in an interdisciplinary mode... She continues her strong interest in textiles but has also developed research excellence in and publications on issues of health.”

Reviewer (E)

"There are very few scholars who have returned to their research site so regularly, so diligently, and over so many years. ... In each of her domains, her work can be relied upon to push frontiers on the basis of careful empirical documentation and classic ethnographic attention to the terms under which people understand their own situations."

Reviewer (F)

"Elisha Renne is one of [a] small group of scholars who continuous research keeps adding fresh angles to our understanding of experiences and representation of development in a broad sense, from the perspective of reproductive health and policy to ritual and religious practices and their performance through cloth and dress."

Reviewer (G)

"*Population and Progress in a Yoruba Town* is one of the most important books to come out on the social and cultural processes that underlie the dynamics of fertility in contemporary Nigeria. It is an ethnographically rich and theoretically insightful book..."

Reviewer (H)

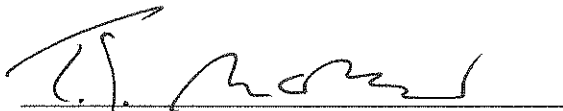
"Currently I would rate Elisha Renne as the most interesting, and best informed, of current researchers visiting Northern Nigeria. ... No one in northern Nigeria is doing comparable work of such quality just now. I think this polio book of hers is very significant indeed, and covers a wider spectrum of issues than just health."

Reviewer (I)

"I was struck by the breadth of her research and her impressive mastery of detail across fields of inquiry...she has considerable 'name recognition' in [African Studies and Medical Anthropology]."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Renne's research is empirically grounded, theoretically astute, and interdisciplinary. She contributes to the teaching mission in both units, and is an active and professional citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Elisha P. Renne be promoted to the rank of professor of anthropology, with tenure, and professor of Afroamerican and African Studies, 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

May 2010